

# car

DECEMBER  
2015  
ISSUE 641  
£4.50

27 MOST  
WANTED CARS  
OF 2016



Aston's DB11 saviour! Honda NSX driven! Range Rover's X3! New Disco, 5-series and many more...

# FORDS of FURY!

**LE MONSTER:** 600BHP GT SUPERCAR TO CONQUER ROAD AND TRACK IN 2016



**RS HAMMER HATCH IS GO!** TAKES OFF LIKE A ROCKET, DRIFTS LIKE A DEMON

## DRIVEN

### New 911: the verdict

And you thought Ferrari's turbos were good...

## GIANT TEST

### Audi enters the four-door war

New A4 vs Jaguar XE and BMW 3-series

## TECH

### The self-driving Tesla: does it work?

+ 5 technologies to save the diesel

## 500-MILE TWIN TEST

### McLaren's 911 Turbo S vs the real thing





Porsche recommends **Mobil 1** and **Michelin**

**If history is any indication, you're looking at  
the future of sports cars.**

**The new 911.  
Ever ahead.**

**Discover more at [porsche.co.uk/911](https://porsche.co.uk/911).**

---

Official fuel economy figures for the 911 Carrera 4S Coupé in mpg (l/100km): urban 22.8 – 27.4 (12.4 – 10.3), extra urban 41.5 – 42.8 (6.8 – 6.6), combined 31.7 – 35.8 (8.9 – 7.9). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 204 – 180 g/km. The mpg and CO<sub>2</sub> figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated tests, are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.



PORSCHE





In the lead role: John Travolta, movie legend and aviation aficionado. Guest star: the legendary North American X-15 that smashed all speed and altitude records and opened the gateway to space. Production: Breitling, the privileged partner of aviation thanks to its reliable, accurate and innovative instruments – such as the famous Chronomat, the ultimate chronograph. Welcome to a world of legends, feats and performance.

**BREITLING.COM**



# WELCOME TO MY WORLD



CHRONOMAT 44



INSTRUMENTS FOR PROFESSIONALS™



Official fuel consumption for the Volvo V40 T2 R-Design (manual) in MPG (l/100km): Urban 38.7 (7.3), Extra Urban 62.8 (4.5), Combined 51.4 (5.5). CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions sales only. \*Subject to availability at participating dealers only on vehicles registered between 01/10/15 and 31/12/15. At the end of the agreement there are 3 options: (i) Renew: Part exchange the vehicle. (ii) Retain: Pay Indemnity may be required. Volvo Car Credit RH1 1SR. **You will not own the vehicle until all payments are made.** The service offer is only applicable when purchasing on Volvo Advantage Personal Contract Purchase on





## MADE IN SWEDEN. TUNED FOR BRITAIN. THE VOLVO V40 R-DESIGN.

British roads are different from Swedish roads. That's why we tested and tuned the V40 R-Design's suspension here in Britain. It puts you in total control, straightening out the toughest of hairpin turns and taming even the meanest of speed bumps.

BOOK A TEST DRIVE TODAY  
AT **VOLVOCARS.CO.UK**

### Personal Contract Purchase Representative

Example: V40 T2 R-Design Rebel Blue

48 Monthly payments	£269
Customer deposit	£269
Finance deposit contribution	£750
Representative APR	4.9% APR
On the road price*	£19,862.50
Total amount of credit	£18,843.50
Interest charges	£2,718.50
Total amount payable	£22,581
Optional final payment	£8,650
Duration of agreement (months)	49
Fixed rate of interest p.a.	2.52%
Mileage per annum	8,000
Excess mileage charge	14.9p per mile

Available with 3 years complementary servicing when purchased on Volvo Advantage Personal Contract Purchase.

127g/km. MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect real driving results. Finance subject to status. Retail the Optional Final Payment to own the vehicle or (ii) Return the vehicle. Further charges may be made subject to the condition or mileage of the vehicle. Terms and conditions apply. Applicants must be 18 or over. Guarantee/vehicles ordered between 01/10/15 and 31/12/15. Services must be carried out at a Volvo Authorised Repairer. Retail offer only. Excludes fleet operators and business users. See [volvocars.co.uk](http://volvocars.co.uk) for full terms and conditions.



# car

DECEMBER 2015



## 12 Insider

- 12** It's back! Mazda's RX rotates full circle
- 17** Exclusive! Jaguar's first EV will be a slinky SUV
- 18** Four Tokyo show reality checks
- 20** Lewis vs Jackie: battle of triple-champ Brits
- 22** The CAR Inquisition: Geely's Peter Horbury
- 24** Steve McQueen's *Le Mans*: the film of the film
- 26** VW's shake-up decoded

## 30 Tech

- 30** Five technologies to save diesel
- 32** Does it work? We try Tesla's autopilot on UK roads
- 34** The next big things, by Volvo's head of crystal balls

## 36 First drives

- 36** New Porsche 911 They've blown it, or have they?
- 42** Toyota Mirai Hydrogen? It's a gas, gas, gas
- 44** Lexus GSF Fascinatingly original M5 rival
- 46** Seat Leon Ultimate Actually it's not even ultimate
- 46** Mercedes G63 From the '70s, yet still cool
- 48** Ferrari 488 Spider vs the elephant in the room
- 50** Quick Group Test Four warm hatches have a scuffle

## 52 Opinion

- 54** The CAR columnists: Gavin Green & Mark Walton
- 59** CAR interactive: your say, your month

# 102

At home with ALL the greatest Bugattis



# 92

New Audi A4 in the fight it always knew it would face. Can it stand up and be counted?



# 36

New Porsche 911, turbochargers and all, gets its first road test

## Features

# 64

### 27 Most wanted cars of 2016

- 64** Ford Focus RS
- 72** New 5-series & E-class
- 73** BMW M2, F-type SVR, Tesla Model X, new Alpine
- 74** Aston Martin DB11 **76** Honda NSX
- 80** Ferrari F12tdf & Porsche Boxster
- 82** Jaguar F-Pace **84** Ford GT

# 92

### Audi A4 Giant Test

New exec lines up against Jaguar XE and BMW 5-series

# 102

### Inside Bugatti heaven

The world's greatest cars, the world's greatest collection

# 112

### McLaren's 911 vs the real thing

New 570S goes head-to-head with 911 Turbo S in our 500-mile tour of Portugal

## Rear End

# 122

Icon buyer  
Used R8 or new F-type? £72k buys either. We choose

# 128

Our cars  
We bid farewell to our Lambo Huracan and S-class PHEV, while our Mondeo goes banger racing

# 141

GBU: your car rated!  
The Good, the Bad & the Ugly: every UK car gets the treatment in our infamously punchy guide

# 162

The CAR Top 10  
Elvis Presley cars



# 112

McLaren's 570S, right on the tail of 911 Turbo S, both literally and metaphorically



## IN OUR iPad EDITION

**CAR's** beautiful imagery works brilliantly on your tablet. Subscribe to the interactive iPad edition, with video content, our Android replica edition, or the magazine itself, on page 90



**ON FACEBOOK**

[facebook.com/CARmagazine](https://facebook.com/CARmagazine)



**ON TWITTER**

[@CARmagazine](https://twitter.com/CARmagazine)

# 84

Ford's astounding new GT: 'you've never driven a car like this before'

GET  
12 ISSUES  
OF CAR  
FROM JUST  
**£33.00!**

see p90





DS AUTOMOBILES

SPIRIT OF  
AVANT-GARDE

NEVER APOLOGISE FOR YOUR POWER,  
INTELLIGENCE OR EFFICIENCY.

## DS 3

WITH AWARD WINNING PURETECH TURBO  
ENGINE TECHNOLOGY



DS *prefers* **TOTAL**

[www.driveDS.co.uk](http://www.driveDS.co.uk)



Official Government Fuel Consumption Figures (litres per 100km/MPG) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km). Highest: DS 3 Ultra Prestige THP 165 S&S 6-Speed manual: Urban 7.1/39.8, Extra Urban 4.6/61.4, Combined 5.6/50.4, 129 g/km CO<sub>2</sub>. Lowest: DS 3 DStyle BlueHDi 100 S&S manual: Urban 3.8/74.3, Extra Urban 3.2/88.3, Combined 3.4/83.1, 87 g/km CO<sub>2</sub>. MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions.



# WELCOME.

## Renault reborn in German clothes



**REMEMBER RENAULT?** This is a brand that lost the plot so spectacularly its product chiefs descended into civil war, and its once bold cars dissolved into blandness. It culminated in Renault UK ditching one-third of its range, including the Espace and Laguna. The malaise ultimately affected the Clio RS too, which went softer, turbo-charged and dual-clutch, diluting the Renaultsport magic.

One consequence of this carnage was Laurens van den Acker becoming Renault's design director. Five years on, it was revealing to speak to the disarmingly honest Dutchman at the Megane's premiere. 'It's nice to be able to come out with so many cars,' he says. 'It takes forever to change a brand's image and you need new product to do it. In England we face a huge challenge.'

A decade or so ago, Renault was a fixture in the UK's top five car makers, but the rise of the German premium brands, allied with Renault's travails, means it's now languishing in 14th place. Van den Acker has a clear strategy for reinvigorating Renault: make it a human-centric brand that promotes its owners' well-being, give the cars a strong family face that gets noticed, and boost the perception of Renault quality through design.

'We needed to reinvent Renault, find its soul,' the designer says. 'I think we've found a great face, a more sensual design. The cars aren't perfect but they're liked and sales are up.'

My issue with the new Megane and the Laguna-replacing Talisman – as well as Peugeot's latest 308 – is that the French are so desperate to convey their Germanic quality their designs are becoming indistinguishable from VW Group's. Van den Acker's reply picks up on the quality aspect: 'I hope you're right because although it's great to love French design, if it falls apart that's no good. It's amazing how much the [quality] level has gone up in car design.' But he concedes: 'I think it's fair to say Talisman and Megane have become more Germanic, but it's not like we're applying the same rules to everything.'

While French flair is alive and kicking in cars like the Twingo, Captur and my favourite Renault, the slammed, imposing new Espace,

van den Acker admits it's being consciously dialled back as the company regroups. But Renault is delivering on its human-centric pledge. On holiday, our Clio rental car was so welcoming with its vast, family-friendly space and high quality rear camera, and the new Kadjar – though demonstrably less innovative than the original Scenic – scores with its refined, free-revving diesel and splendid comfort and refinement.

The market is responding: Renault is set to be Europe's fastest growing car maker this year. Automotive revenues grew 10% over the last three months, with the Kadjar, Espace and Clio selling at higher prices. And in 2016, the volume-driving Megane and Scenic will be replaced, along with the rebirth of Alpine to quicken the enthusiast's pulse.

Then what for van den Acker? 'My job will be done after two good generations. The big challenge is going to be that difficult second generation. So far, so good, we've come a long way. With the second wave, are we going to be French or not? That's the big question...'

Like Renault, Ford has fought back from adversity, with globalisation getting its volume range into shape. Now they're turning their attention to serious performance, with the Focus RS and new GT. They're the stars of this issue – I hope you enjoy it.

**PHIL McNAMARA**  
Editor

Renault design boss van den Acker: 'Although it's great to love French design, if it falls apart it's no good'



Cover photography Steffen Jahn & Wilson Hennessy

**car+**

THE CAR ARCHIVE BROUGHT TO LIFE

CAR+ is our new digital online service, which allows you to read great articles from our archive, and also the latest issue of the magazine, on screen. Go to [carmagazine.co.uk](http://carmagazine.co.uk) and click on CAR+

### THE LAST OF THE GT40s



'With the right sort of courage and a good day you could have 165mph. But 130mph in fourth gear going into the Robin Hood roundabout on the A11 is quite enough.' So wrote Nick Brittan as he drove the last of the Ford GT40s for CAR back in July 1968. He liked it, but said he'd rather spend his six grand on six Cortina 1600Es! This typically irreverent piece is available to read in CAR+. Ford's new GT – p84

### ALSO ON CAR+...

Picking up a legend! Back in July 1985 Gavin Green picked up an early Ferrari 288GTO from the factory and drove it back to the UK.

## car+ AROUND THE WORLD

WE'RE ALSO PUBLISHED IN:



CHINA



ITALY



SOUTH AFRICA



THAILAND



BRAZIL



INDIA



MALAYSIA



SPAIN



TURKEY



# INSIDER.

Cars, people, scoops, motorsport, analysis: the month according to *CAR*



## No distractions

Designer Maeda: 'We reduced the number of elements to the minimum. There is just the saddle leather and a couple of simple dials and controls - no distractions'

## Rotary here please

Compact rotary engine sits well aft of the front axle, effectively making the RX mid-engined. Remainder of enormous bonnet presumably conceals several spare wheels and a stowaway

## There will be light

MX-5 is proof of Mazda's love of small, lightweight cars made of aluminium. RX-Vision will shrink in its transition to road-ready, Porsche Cayman-baiting RX-7



# New RX-7: Mazda's rotary renaissance

Standout beautiful and powered by a next-generation rotary, the RX-Vision is the future Mazda is hell-bent on making real

**B**ASED ON THEIR showings at the recent Tokyo motor show, Honda – rightly or wrongly – is convinced the future is fuel-cell powered. Over at Nissan, Carlos Ghosn is on a path to autonomous electric mobility via cash-rich funky crossovers. In stark contrast Mazda has gazed at 2018 and seen this: an analogue sports car notable for all that it lacks (a hybrid powertrain, autonomous tech, a neon-lit, tablet-stuffed 'lounge' interior) as the things that it has: fossil-fuelled rotary engine, rear-wheel drive, a manual gearbox and a striking, unfussy beauty.

'This car is the embodiment of Mazda's future vision: the ultimate front-engined, rear-wheel-drive sports car,' said CEO Masamichi Kogai as he pulled the covers from the RX-Vision and the world bit its collective fist in lust. 'It is driving pleasure with excellent environmental performance. The rotary engine has not been an easy path but one day the rotary will make a comeback. There are many issues to overcome but we won't stop working.'

Mazda insists RX-Vision is a concept car in the truest sense, and that a production-ready RX-7 does not lurk in the wings. 'I can tell you that a production car does not exist: this is a pure design concept,' says veteran Mazda designer Ikuo Maeda, whose team created RX-Vision's endless ▶

## Manual and rwd

No NSX-style fancy all-wheel drive, just driven rear wheels and a manual 'box, though Mazda acknowledges buyers may demand a nice and easy DCT





## Adjustable aero

Rear end dominated by twin exhausts, adjustable rear wing and a prominent diffuser promising downforce, but the body was shaped for style first, aero second

## Look, no creases

Vast, organic flanks designer Maeda's favourite bit – 'Much of this design is adaptable for future products'. Good news



bonnet, fuss-free surfaces and restrained, almost classical detailing. 'This is a pure design exercise, though I hope this is a car with which we can go head-to-head with Porsche. It is our aspiration to take our brand to the next level. I hope we have enough strong voices to dictate that we do that with this car.'

The concept sits on a unique platform and carries its compact rotary motor low and tight against the front bulkhead. At 4389mm by 1925mm and 1160mm, the two-seater comes in shorter, wider and lower than a 991 Porsche 911. 'The concept is on the larger side, but the ideal would be lightweight sports car with a very taut design,' continues Maeda. 'There are a number of potential materials, including carbonfibre and aluminium – Mazda has the technology to exploit aluminium. If you consider the price and engine performance [£49k and 321bhp for the 3.4 S] then perhaps the Cayman is an appropriate comparison.'

It's a sentiment echoed by r&d boss Kiyoshi Fujiwara. 'If we mass-produce this car then we would make it lighter than a Cayman. We made the MX-5 a very light car. We'd do the same with this rotary.'

All of which bodes well for a production coupe (and convertible) with the RX-Vision's styling and the RX-7 name. Fujiwara: 'In the past RX-7 was always a two-seater or a 2+2. RX-8 was a four-seater. If we call it RX-9 – six-seater? You can imagine this car's name.' Strengthening the case for a next-gen RX-7 was the reaction to the car in Tokyo: Mazda held sway over the kind of new-product hysteria normally reserved for a new iPhone. As for the timescale, while a 2017 release would make for a neat anniversary launch – the original Cosmo rotary debuted in 1967 – Mazda will have its work cut out to get the car ready. Alfa's crack team may have created the new Giulia in two years but they didn't have the rotary

engine to contend with.

Fond of burning fuel, slurping oil and merrily parping all sorts of filth from its exhausts, the Wankel has caused Mazda no small amount of grief. It won Le Mans for them of course, and the third-generation RX-7 FD is rightly regarded as one of Japan's great sport cars but, as engineer Fujiwara points out, the rotary's also been challenging. 'We have a solution now for the problems but we need to be sure it is durable. We want to do two or three times more testing than we do normally, because we have this past experience of quality problems and causing such inconvenience to our customers.'

Why bother, you wonder? While there are advantages in the rotary's strong output for a given size and weight, and the type's intrinsic smoothness, you get the feeling that, perhaps commendably, at Mazda heart is ruling head.

Maeda: 'I owned one of the first RX-7s and a third-generation RX-7 FD, my favourite. We feel that if we drop the rotary the technology will disappear from the world. For that reason we have the mindset to cherish it. We would dearly like to race with it again too, and if we do I'd like to be behind the wheel'

The RX-Vision's beguiling form, weighing next to nothing, badged RX-7 and howling onto our roads just as a race version makes a triumphant return to Le Mans in the 2018 24 Hours? Sounds like a future worth striving for.

**BEN MILLER**



## Mazda's plan to save the rotary

► **THE PROS:** Powerful for a given size, smooth and lightweight.

► **THE CONS:** Sealing the rotor unit is notoriously difficult – gases leak past the rotor tips, saddling the car with dirty exhaust emissions and poor fuel economy.

► **THE FIX:** Mazda's developed its own technology to be able to observe the combustion process within the engine, something manufacturers have done for years in order to hone the conventional piston engine to near-perfection. Mazda is feeding this information into computer analysis to yield improvements in exhaust gas quality and fuel economy. It's also working on those all-important rotor seals, and seeking to boost torque – another rotary weakness – through ignition timing.

► **THE OTHER OPTIONS:** Hybrid technology has previously been hailed as the rotary's saviour (Audi dabbled with the idea on the 2011 A1 E-tron concept) but Mazda's Fujiwara says, 'We are not currently working on a hybrid rotary.' Turbocharging, as employed on the FD RX-7 and Le Mans-winning 787B, is a safer bet.

20-inch wheels set those classic proportions off nicely – RX is one handsome Mazda







## When opportunities present themselves, some act. The new Continental GT V8 S.

If you buy a Continental GT V8 S on finance before the end of this month, we'll make a £20,000 contribution towards your finance deposit.

So why wait? Call 0845 689 1587 or visit [www.BentleyMotors.com](http://www.BentleyMotors.com)

**Solutions Personal Contract Plan\* representative example for Bentley Continental GT V8 S Coupé 4.0 subject to a 25 month, 5,000 mile per annum agreement**

Duration	25 Months	Cost of Options (included in cash price of vehicle)	£6,140.00	Total amount of credit	£94,654.57
Deposit	£42,210.51	Acceptance fee**	£0.00	Representative APR	6.60% APR
Deposit Contribution	£20,000.00	Optional final payment	£85,120.00	Rate of interest	6.61% fixed
Total Deposit	£62,210.51	Option to purchase fee***	£10.00	Excess mileage charge	72p per mile
24 Monthly Payments of	£899.00	Total amount payable	£168,916.51		
Cash Price of Vehicle	£156,865.00	Total amount payable by customer	£148,916.51		

Continental GT V8 S fuel consumption – EU Drive Cycle in mpg (l/100 km): Urban 18.0 (15.7); Extra Urban 36.2 (7.8); Combined 26.4 (10.7). CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions 250 g/km.

**\*At the end of the agreement there are three options: i) own the vehicle: pay the optional final payment; ii) return the vehicle: subject to fair wear and tear, charges may apply; or iii) replace: part exchange the vehicle.**

Available on Solutions Personal Contract Plan. \*\*Payable with first payment. \*\*\*Payable with optional final payment. 18s and over. Subject to availability. Finance subject to status. Terms and conditions apply. Offer available when registered by 30th November 2015 from participating Dealers. Offers are not available in conjunction with any other offer and may be varied or withdrawn at any time. Accurate at time of publication November 2015. Freepost Bentley Financial Services.





## In the moment

# Sliding an 833bhp Mustang around LA

Ken Block's alternative guide to downtown city driving, *Gymkhana*-style

01

### Playground LA

'It takes a production company with movie-making experience to pull off something like *Gymkhana 7*. They've got great scouts, to find locations and work with the authorities to make it happen. Luckily I don't have to do any of that. I get to script the run with my team, and then to drive it. It's two-part fun for me.'

02

### A super-soft set-up

'The suspension set-up is key. I like to drive my *Gymkhana* cars like you would a rally car on a gravel stage. The set-up is soft so the car moves around, you get more dramatic weight transfer and it's easy to break the wheels loose. When I brake hard the rear end goes light and I can set it into a drift pretty easily.'

03

### 833bhp and no forced induction

'I don't need crazy bhp, just useable bhp. I like 600-800bhp and a broad spread of power. [Some engines] give peaky power in a narrow range, but the V8 is flexible with great throttle response. You can baby it around on the torque but there's a lot of horsepower when you need it.'

04

### Handbrake or throttle?

'A bit of both. I use the handbrake when I want to precisely place the car. I use weight transfer and throttle, which comes back to the set-up and tyres. Pirelli doesn't make a drift tyre so they made me one from one of their performance moulds using our compound.'

05

### All-wheel drive

'It's a 4wd powertrain with a centre diff that disengages the rear drive when I use the handbrake, so I can lock the rear wheels without locking up the engine. I can drive around with the handbrake on if I want. It's a three-pedal set-up. For filming I don't left-foot brake but if I'm racing for time I'll do it.'

06

### Minimal clocks

'The important dials are engine temp and rpms – there's no speedo. The main thing is engine temp. The car doesn't get a lot of airflow because there's not a lot of high-speed work, so we're always concerned with keeping the engine safe. This is the first V8 on a *Gymkhana* car – it's a great engine.'

## NEW CAR DEBRIEF > RANGE ROVER EVOQUE CONVERTIBLE

**1 Roofless streak** – purists may tut, but the Evoque Convertible's set to sate the appetites of those for whom SUV coupes aren't sufficiently flamboyant. Solihull may just be ahead of the curve in this premium niche.

**2 Less is more** – so hearty is the re-engineering – strengthened floor, new windscreen surround, sturdier doors – the cabrio has greater torsional rigidity than the three-door, albeit with a near-280kg weight penalty. 4wd and nine-speed auto standard, 237bhp petrol or 178bhp diesel engines.

**3 Hoodwinked** – Remember the 2012 concept's rigid tonneau cover? It's vanished. Instead, the largest fabric roof in production concertinas behind the seats, its front third serving also as a vanity panel. Only four seats here, with an inconveniently-narrow letterbox boot opening out back.

**4 Spring sale** – prices are yet to be confirmed but expect them to be north of the £42k+ required for the similarly-specced three-door when it arrives in showrooms in the second quarter of 2016.





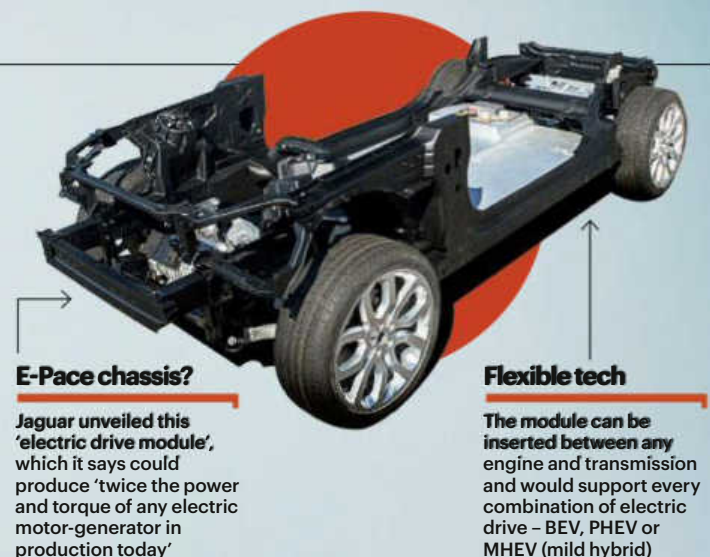
**T**HINK LUXURY Tesla rivals are solely a German pursuit? Think again: Jaguar is pushing ahead with a pure battery electric vehicle (BEV), and sources say it'll be an SUV to take on the Model X and Audi's Q6 E-tron.

Like every Jaguar including next year's F-Pace, the BEV will be constructed of aluminium. While its hard points were carefully determined to meet US standards, the design is anything but boxy and boring. Instead, expect a low and flowing silhouette, a steeply raked windscreen and a tapered rear end, and a mix of F-Pace and C-X75 supercar cues to spectacular effect. A slippery shape, assisted by active and passive aerodynamic aids, is critical to conserve juice. Naturally the wheels will be big in diameter, but shod with relatively narrow rubber.

The propulsion system is still under wraps, though Jaguar recently showed an all-wheel-drive research chassis, featuring lithium-ion batteries housed in the middle, a 114bhp electric motor up front and 194bhp turning the rear axle. The company has signed a partnership with Magna Steyr, bagging capacity at its Graz plant in Austria. The BEV needs to find around 20,000 buyers a year to make money. As it's slightly smaller than the F-Pace, the electric SUV could neatly be called E-Pace. Don't expect sales until late this decade, however.

## Now Jaguar is gunning for Tesla

Electric E-Pace set to sex-up SUV market as Jag's global advance picks up speed. **By Georg Kacher**



Jaguar Land Rover isn't overlooking conventional powertrains, and work is underway on new inline six-cylinder engines to replace the V6. The four-cylinder Ingenium unit would provide the basis, a concept similar to BMW's: it groups together 500cc cylinder packs to create its four, six and bent-eight engines.

Due in late 2017, JLR's 3.0-litre six will feature direct-injection and turbocharging, and be offered in petrol and diesel form. The unit should be sufficiently versatile to produce 300/400/500bhp as a petrol, and 275/335/400bhp in diesel guise. Key benefits include lighter weight, reduced consumption/emissions and a natural fit for rear-wheel-drive Jaguars. That said, it's equally well suited for the bigger Land Rover and Range Rover models.

Neatly, it provides a strong link to Jaguar's impressive straight-six history, which took off with the XK120, won Le Mans with the C-type and D-type, and ceased production only as recently the 1990s. It's all a far cry from the pure electric SUV of the E-Pace, but hey, that's progress for you.



E-Pace will be slightly smaller than F-Pace, and much wilder looking

# Meanwhile, back in Tokyo...

## 4 Japanese showstoppers

From self-driving cars with retracting steering wheels to the second coming of Gordon Murray, Japan's car makers are bursting with stuff we want to see more of. **By CJ Hubbard**



### Nissan IDS Concept

Nissan says we shouldn't assume the IDS previews Mk2 Leaf styling, but who are they kidding? This all-carbon electric concept is a statement of the company's thinking about autonomous driving tech, which it remains committed to introducing by 2020. The 'Intelligent Drive' features include full 'piloted driving' capability – in which the steering wheel retracts

into the dash – and the option to park it via iPad. Somewhat alarmingly, it's proposed the autonomous mode will mimic the owner's driving style, rather than proceed in the most logical and orderly fashion, but sensors and LEDs around the car aim to signal reassurance to cyclists and pedestrians. Skinny tyres and aero optimisation maximise driving range.

#### NEED TO KNOW

> **What it is** The politest autonomous car concept yet > **Powered by** Electric motor, 60kWh battery > **Made from** Carbonfibre > **Dimensions** Chopped 1380mm height to reduce air resistance > **Aimed at** Tightening the screw on internal combustion



### Yamaha Sports Ride Concept

It's no OX99-11 but this is a pretty bold statement from Yamaha. Following on from 2013's Motiv city car concept, the Japanese motorbike maker has once again teamed up with Gordon Murray to show a four-wheeler based on the erstwhile F1 design maestro's 'iStream' manufacturing process. This time it's a low-slung sports car and the

bones of the project are built from carbonfibre – a first for iStream – in an effort to convince the world that the wonder weave can be cost-effective as well as superlight. There's a tantalising suggestion the Sports Ride could be powered by a Yamaha bike engine for high-rev thrills, but at this stage it's all just wishful thinking. Production not confirmed.

#### NEED TO KNOW

> **What it is** The second coming of Gordon Murray. Possibly > **Powered by** Tbc; here's hoping a bike engine > **Made from** Carbonfibre > **Length/width/height** 3900/1720/1170mm > **Aimed at** Lotus Elise customers with auto anorexia

### Lexus LF-LC Flagship Concept

It's a vast four-door saloon with coupe-ish styling and a hydrogen fuel-cell powertrain. Visually, it gives us a good idea what the next LS flagship is going to look like; technically it might be a bit more far-fetched – though Toyota has just put the hydrogen-powered Mirai on sale in the UK, so it has the capability. Key design features include a grille

big enough for barbecuing small animals, muscular haunches and tail lights that look like giant boomerangs having an orgy. The spacious four-seater interior includes gesture control, which should be a given since the BMW 7-series already offers it. In-wheel motors at the front and conventionally motor-driven rears create torque vectoring 4wd.

#### NEED TO KNOW

> **What it is** Sexy future alternative to S-class and 7-series > **Powered by** Electricity generated by hydrogen fuel-cell, 4wd > **Made from** Steel > **Length/width/height** 5300/2000/1410mm > **Aimed at** Proving Lexus can do beauty as well as luxury



### Toyota S-FR Concept

If at first you don't succeed, Toyota, please, please try again. The GT86 hasn't exactly set the sales charts aflame, so we've no doubt this proposal for a smaller, cheaper (and therefore less profitable) S-FR coupe is going to be a tough sell in the boardroom. But Mazda seems to be proving there is an appetite for compressed driving purity with the

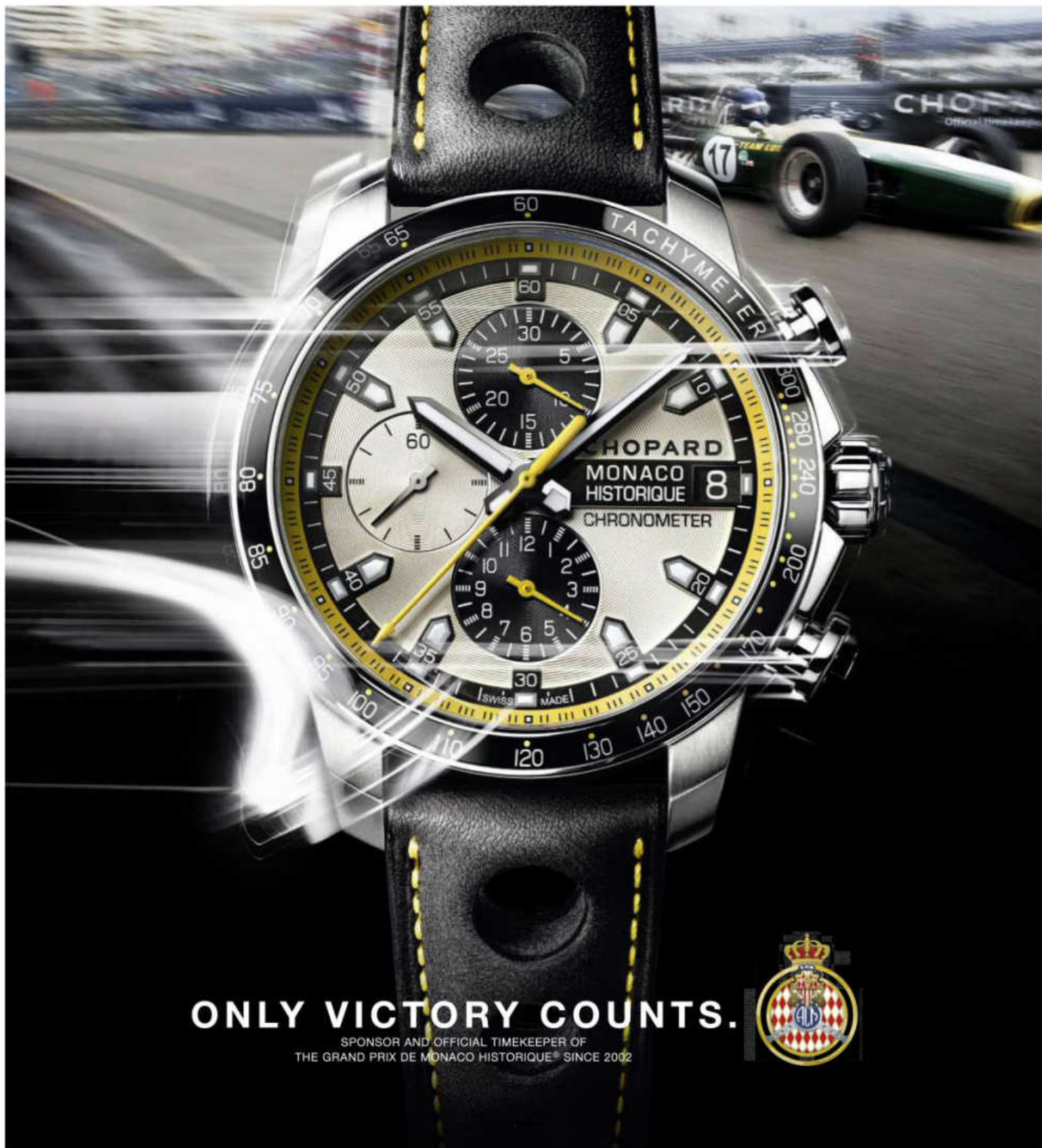
latest MX-5, and this similarly sized but more practical (it seats four) fixed-head alternative could take a piece of that action by undercutting the roadster. The confirmed layout is front-engine, rear-wheel drive and six-speed manual; rumours suggest a 130bhp 1.5 is lined up should the project get the go-ahead. The petition starts here.

#### NEED TO KNOW

> **What it is** Kid brother to the GT86 and wannabe MX-5 rival > **Powered by** 4-cyl petrol, rwd > **Made from** Steel > **Length/width/height** 3990/1695/1320mm > **Aimed at** People who already own a hairdryer, or need four seats








**ONLY VICTORY COUNTS.**

SPONSOR AND OFFICIAL TIMEKEEPER OF  
THE GRAND PRIX DE MONACO HISTORIQUE® SINCE 2002



GRAND PRIX DE MONACO HISTORIQUE CHRONO (168570-3001)

GRAND PRIX DE MONACO  
HISTORIQUE®

*Chopard*



Of course Jackie raced in an era before the FIA imposed restrictions on sideburn width

## MOTORSPORT

# Lewis vs Jackie: who's king of the triple-champ Brits?

It's taken 42 years for another British driver to match Jackie Stewart's three F1 titles. Who's the bigger hero? **By Tom Clarkson**

**H E PARTIED ON** Monday and slept on Tuesday, but what did winning a third world title at the US Grand Prix bring Lewis Hamilton, other than a hangover and a healthy bonus from Mercedes Grand Prix?

In a word: notoriety. There have been 64 F1 world champions, but only six three-time champions and Lewis is now one of them. He can be mentioned in the same breath as Jack Brabham, Jackie Stewart, Niki Lauda, Nelson Piquet and, most significantly, Ayrton Senna; Lewis has always wanted to equal the achievements of the late, great Brazilian. 'I pinch myself every day,' says Lewis, 'but it still hasn't sunk in.'

Jackie Stewart was in Austin to witness Hamilton's title success, 42 years after he clinched his third title for Tyrrell in 1973. 'This is a great day for Lewis,' said Stewart. 'He's driven brilliantly this year, but I still think he can get better. He's 30 years old, which means he's reaching maturity and now is the right time to improve on that. He has experience and from experience you gain knowledge, and with knowledge you can improve yourself. I think his best years are still ahead of him.'

Stewart retired from driving at the end of 1973, at the age of 34. It had been an emotional season, following the deaths of his friend Roger Williamson and his team-mate Francois Cevert,

and it was an intense year of travelling, with new races in Brazil and Sweden.

To this extent, there are parallels between 1973 and 2015. We witnessed heart-wrenching scenes in Hungary, when F1 struggled to come to terms with the death of Jules Bianchi, and there have been changes to the calendar too, with the last-minute absence of the German GP and the addition of Mexico.

Even the lifestyles of Stewart in his pomp and Hamilton aren't dissimilar. Lewis travels regularly to America, where he has a house in Colorado, and Jackie used to hop across the pond frequently. In 1971 he flew across the Atlantic 86 times, fulfilling driving commitments in CanAm and a burgeoning career as a commentator for ABC Sports.

Both men mix with A-list celebs, Lewis with the likes of Rihanna, Pharrell Williams and Nicole Scherzinger and Jackie, back in the day, with Princess Grace of Monaco, George Harrison and Princess Anne. They both push the limits of fashion, Lewis with his tattoos and urban chic, Jackie with his sideburns and corduroy caps. Their driving styles are very different. Jackie was all smoothness and guile, while Lewis is more of a hustler and has great bravado. There is no doubting Lewis's domination this year; he's won 10 races (with two rounds to go) to Stewart's five in '73 and he's taken 11 poles to Stewart's three.

How much more can Hamilton achieve? 'I want to win more titles,' he says, 'but I have no goal in terms of a number. I don't think I'll beat Michael [Schumacher]'s seven; in fact, I hope no-one beats Michael because he's a legend.' Question is: at what point does Lewis himself achieve legend status? @TomClarksonF1

## Bloke test

### LEWIS

### JACKIE

#### F1 CAREER

9 seasons (so far)

**LEWIS WINS**

9 seasons

#### F1 TEAMS

McLaren, Mercedes

**DRAW**

BRM, Matra, March, Tyrrell

#### RECORD

43 wins, 85 podiums, 49 poles, 26 fastest laps

**LEWIS WINS**

27 wins, 43 podiums, 17 poles, 15 fastest laps

#### EARNINGS

£20m (2015)

**LEWIS WINS**

£200,000 (1973)

#### CELEBRITY FRIENDS

Pharrell Williams, Rihanna, Nicole Scherzinger

**DRAW**

Princess Grace, Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton

#### NICKNAME

Hamster

**JACKIE WINS**

The Flying Scot

#### CATCHPHRASE

'Hammertime!'

**LEWIS WINS**

'Let the car do the work'

#### FASHION SENSE

Urban cool

**JACKIE WINS**

Sophisticated, with a touch of '70s hipster

#### FAVOURITE FOOD

Peanut butter on toast

**LEWIS WINS**

White bread with a black crust on the top

## LEWIS WINS 5:2



Stewart's Tyrrell-Ford (right). Trickier than Hamilton's Merc?

GETTY IMAGES



# ON TRACK. ON ROAD. ON AVONS.



Avon Tyres have a winning line up of high performance and ultra high performance car tyres designed and developed to meet the demands of motoring today. Whether you are driving through city streets, cruising the autobahn or competing on the race track, rediscover the thrilling experience of motoring in its finest form. Our flagship ultra-high performance tyre, the acclaimed ZZ5, now features an A-grade for wet grip, the highest rating awarded under EU regulations, across all sizes in the range. Avon. The great British tyre that's taking on the world. [www.avon-tyres.co.uk](http://www.avon-tyres.co.uk)



British tradition. World reputation.



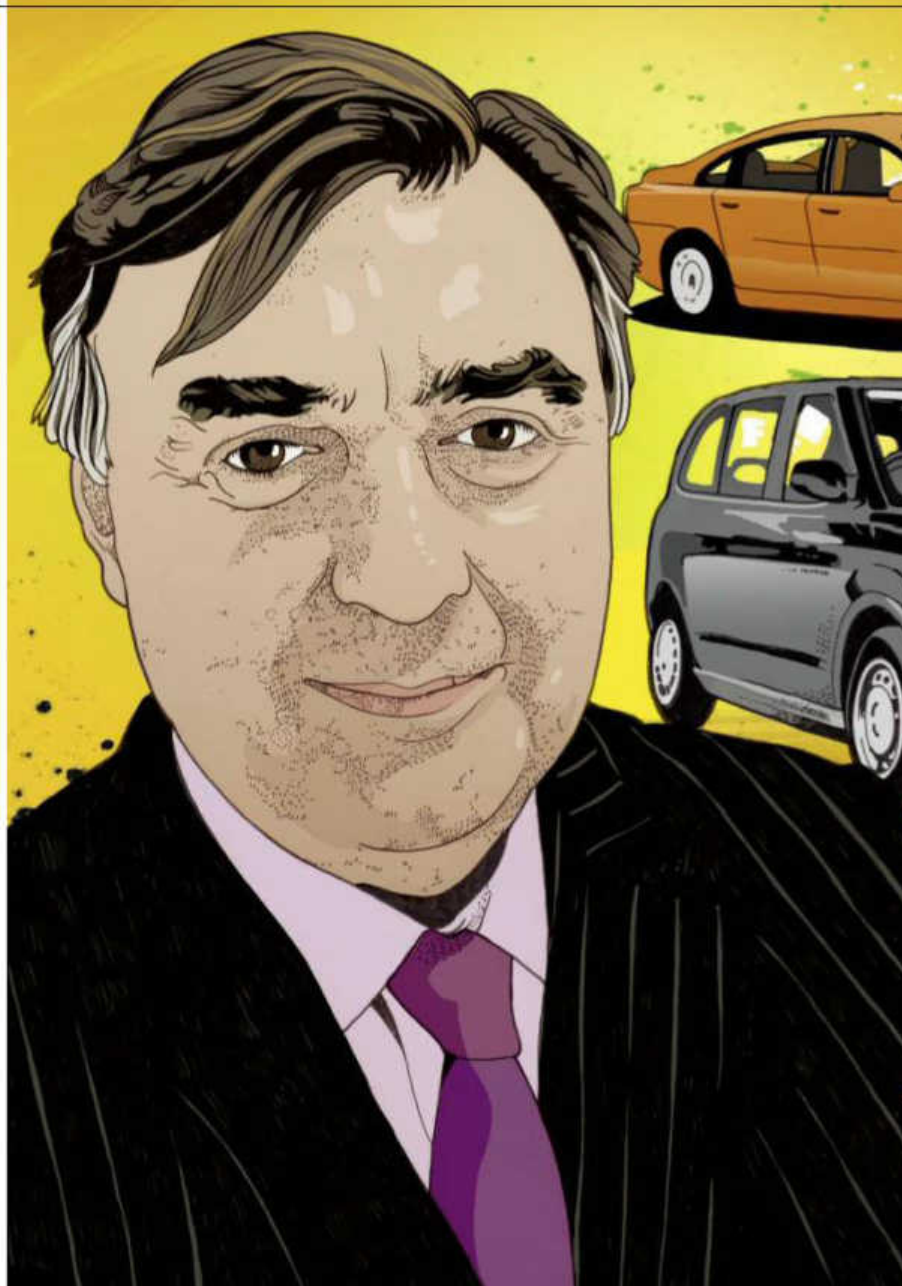
# ‘Copying is over in China. Companies have proper design departments now’

Geely design boss **Peter Horbury** talks up the Chinese company’s range and his new taxi for London (while talking down the use of Volvo’s parts bin)

**D**ESPITE CONFESSING THAT he’s old enough to qualify for a bus pass, 65-year-old Peter Horbury shows no signs of quitting. After a distinguished career at Ford and two stints as Volvo design boss – including during the influential ‘90s when he redefined the ‘boxy’ brand, courtesy of a pronounced shoulder line and strong, smooth lines on the first-generation S80, S60 and C70 – he ended up back in Sweden in 2009 just before Chinese upstart Geely decided to buy the brand. Moving swiftly to design senior vice president for the Geely Group in 2011, he’s spent the last four years putting fire under the brand’s ambitions. ‘It’s a whole new challenge and so much fun,’ he enthuses, ‘because there was no brand identity before, no design department. My job is to design the next wave of cars but my even bigger job is to bring up a whole new generation of Geely designers capable of taking that momentum into the future.’

Now boasting a team of 320 people he’s busy making sure design is at the heart of Geely’s car-making process. ‘To get a car into production takes an awful lot more than doing a sketch and maybe a clay and giving them to an engineer. That’s what Geely did in the past. All the inevitable changes were done by an engineer who hadn’t really got the same eye or approach. Now we have to show how design and engineering work together in a way that doesn’t lose the design intent. That’s as much a part of the education of the company as it is the young designers.’

So presumably there’ll be no more copycat designs from Geely – like the awful 2009 GE concept that sullied the Rolls-Royce Phantom? ‘It’s a strange phenomenon,’ concedes Horbury. ‘Confucian teaching said that the master knew everything and the apprentice had to learn everything the master



## CAR’S CURVEBALLS 6 questions only we would ask...

### Tell us about your first car...

‘It was a Renault 4 L bought when I was a student at the Royal College of Art. The L stood for “lousy”. I had a limit of £300 and found it in the *Evening Standard* newspaper.

### Which achievement makes you most proud?

‘Having the ambition from the age of six or seven to become a car designer and actually getting

there. I remember at my grammar school careers night saying, “I want to be a car designer” and my teacher replying, “Have you thought about insurance?” Cars need insurance.” But I went to art school and in 1974 walked into Chrysler’s Whitley studio – now Jaguar’s – and started work on the Horizon model. I did the bumper, grille and lamps.’

### What’s the best thing

### you’ve done in a car?

‘Taking my Ford GT onto the Falkenberg track in Sweden with a professional driver to show me the ropes. Finding out where the limits are, or actually not finding out where the limits are, was fantastic. I still own it.’

### Tell us how you screwed up...

[Laughs] Dear, dear, me... every car design has at least one mistake, or one thing that could have been done better. On the 1994 Volvo 960 facelift the front bumper seems to be falling off. That side feature line

rubbing-strip still really grates on me.

### Supercar or classic?

I buy *Classic Cars* magazine, so I can choose a different classic every month and not actually buy one.

### Company curveball... Did you know about Geely founder Li ShuFu’s unusual poetry-writing hobby?

Yes, he once sent me a poem he’d written about the moon. It was translated very well into English. He’s completely different from any other boss I’ve previously had...





Geely's 2009 GE. Confucius say 'He who knocks off Rolls shall inherit Peter Horbury'

knew before he could form his own opinions. So copying was very honourable. I'm supposed to be honoured if a company turns out a product that looks like an old Volvo. It came to a head again recently with the Range Rover Evoque copy [the X7 by Landwind]. But copying is over in China. Companies have proper design departments and that's given them confidence.'

Isn't the 'new' vehicle for London Taxi International (a brand also owned by Geely) and unveiled in the capital in October as part of the Chinese president's state visit to Britain, a bit derivative too though? 'When the job to design the next London taxi came up I thought, "that's a great swansong". And the brief was totally clear: it had to look like a London taxi. But it's not a repeat, it's a reminder.'

To be fair to Horbury and his team, he hasn't simply updated the latest TX4. Instead he's 'gone back to the future', taking design cues from the earlier 1958 FX4 Fairway, including the longer bonnet, vertical grille and round lamps, plus a shoulder line that kicks up over the real wheel. It's also longer to fit six passengers, has a large glass panoramic roof so tourists can take in the city skyline and returns to a C-pillar-hinged rear door to make it easier to get into the back after chatting to the driver about

his willingness to go south of the river.

Oh, and the drivetrain is a plug-in petrol/electric hybrid promising 30-plus miles in full electric mode and has a modern driver's cabin with a large floating centre console and colour touchscreen plus switchgear similar to the latest XC90's. Are some in fact the same? 'I can't tell you,' Horbury chuckles. 'You'll have to make that conclusion'. Designed in Geely's Barcelona studio and built in a new purpose-built factory in Coventry, the idea is to sell the taxi well beyond London and in other spin-off shapes to help its business case. Meanwhile, a new range of Geelys sharing Volvo platforms are coming to Western Europe by 2018 to boost global sales from just over 400,000 in 2014, starting with a Qashqai-sized crossover – what else? – that will, says Horbury, match Ford quality. Will he have his feet up on a round-the-world cruise by then? He laughs at the thought. 'I have an eight-year-old daughter and two sons aged 35 and 33, so I won't be going to play golf. I'm staying young...'

**GUY BIRD**



Horbury's 'S80' concept was one of the cars that transformed Volvo from its 'brick-like' image. New TX5 taxi set to do the same for cabbies?

ILLUSTRATION: MATTHEW HOLLINGS

VW badge arrived just in time to stop the building rusting away



## Events that rocked the car world

### VW buys into Skoda

**IT SEEMS** hard to credit, but there must now be young drivers who've never heard a Skoda joke. To them, a Skoda with twin tailpipes is surely a vRS, not a wheelbarrow, while the concept of a heated rear window being fitted as a hand-warming device because buyers were so often required to push will be baffling: now the marque regularly tops owner satisfaction surveys. Yet such was the state of Skoda's art 25 years ago when, on 9 December 1990, the Czech state chose Volkswagen to help privatise and modernise the firm.

Following the collapse of Communism in 1989 and the rapid onset of a market economy in its wake, the authorities soon realised Skoda wasn't strong enough to stand on its own. The homegrown car maker was drowning in debt (2.5 billion Czech crowns) accrued putting the Favorit into production to replace the rear-engined 100-series, and was still struggling with quality control that had already made it the laughing stock of the industry.

BMW and GM were among those interested in taking Skoda on, but in the end it was between VW and Renault. The Germans got the nod after pledging to invest a remarkable 9bn Deutschmarks and work to improve the Favorit rather than immediately replace it; indeed, it formed the basis

of the Felicia in 1994, and it wasn't until the 1996 Octavia that the first 'new' VW-Skoda arrived.

As with the takeover of Seat, Volkswagen AG chairman Carl Hahn masterminded the Skoda deal. The attraction was a cheap, trained workforce building a viable low-cost car that would give VW an entry-point into emerging Eastern Europe economies. There were teething troubles – the Germans made job cuts the Czechs found hard to swallow after decades of guaranteed employment – but today Skoda's hard-won reputation for no-nonsense value makes the wisdom of the move seem clear.

Back in 1991, when VW formerly acquired its initial 31% stake for DM300m, Skoda sold 172,000 cars; in 2014 it sold 1.04m, a rise of 12.7% on 2013 and 1.4% of the entire global market. Sales revenue increased 13.9% to €11.8bn while operating profit shot up 56.5% to €817m. No one's laughing now.

**CJ HUBBARD**



Favorit-based Felicia was launched under VW in '94. Joke not quite over...

GETTY IMAGES

## Connect 4

### SUZUKI KEI CARS

We know Suzuki for Swift and Vitara, but back in Japan it's a kei-car pioneer



#### Mini pick-up

Suzuki Mighty Deck concept (2015)

Japan's 'kei' or microcars subscribe to strict rules on engine size and footprint, but beyond that, anything goes. Hence the new Mighty Deck, a tiny lifestyle pick-up. Sounds weird, but Suzuki has previous form with a production micro ute called the Mighty Boy. Quite.



#### Mini people carrier

Suzuki Wagon R (1993-present)

A kei-car best-seller now on its fifth generation. The original 1993 Wagon R was among the first to use the 'tall boy' body design for extra interior space. The bigger, non-kei Wagon R+ (pictured) led a double life as the Vauxhall Agila.



#### Mini performance

Suzuki Cappuccino (1991-1997)

Weighing 725kg and powered by a 63bhp 657cc three-pot turbo, this diminutive roadster hits 60mph in 8.0sec – which probably feels fast enough in something the size of a running shoe. 1100 were officially imported into the UK.



#### Mini motoring

Suzulight (1955-1969)

Suzulight is the name Suzuki chose when it branched out from motorcycles to cars in 1955, creating a whole range to take advantage of the new Keijidosha ('light car') regulations. Suzuki has been a leading kei-car producer ever since.



McQueen with co-star Elga Andersen and director Lee Katz, discussing the script... once it finally turned up



## Le Mans: the film of the film

New documentary lays bare the truth behind McQueen's flawed race odyssey

**L**E MANS IS a terrible movie. The storyline is thin and there's no dialogue for the first 38 minutes. When it was made in 1970 it had the biggest budget of any Steve McQueen film to date, but it still managed to go over-budget and its chaotic production cost him close friends and creative collaborators. The critics hated it and it was a box-office flop. Yet it now has a cult following, because it remains arguably the most evocative, accurate representation of one of the most exciting, glamorous eras in motorsport. That was really all McQueen wanted to do: he didn't want much of a script or storyline. 'I don't think there is any racing driver who could tell you why he races,' he said. 'But I think that he could probably show you.'

The sad story of *Le Mans* has been told before, but a new documentary tells it afresh with remarkable new material. In garages and long-forgotten archives the producers found hours of behind-the-scenes footage: *Le Mans* was previously thought to have been a 'closed set'. And hidden under a stage in a studio in LA they uncovered the original rushes: the famed 'million feet of film' reported to have been shot, but which was thought to have been destroyed. Lost footage of Porsche 917s and Ferrari 512s thundering down Mulsanne deserves to be seen on the big screen, so the documentary is being given a cinema release.

But although the material is better than the

bad TV footage the producers of *Senna* had to work with, the story isn't as compelling or important, and the storytelling not as polished. *Steve McQueen: The Man and Le Mans* could do with another edit, not least to the title. The narrative is pleasingly free-form and the recordings of interviews with McQueen – some also newly discovered – allow him to tell his own story. The contributors are

impressive, from Swedish actress Louise Edlind, who became an MP and hasn't spoken about the film for decades, to British racing legends Derek Bell and David Piper, who drove in the race scenes. The film reveals a few new facts which will be of interest to McQueen or motorsport obsessives, and it's of wider interest as a document of how chaotic Hollywood could be: the *Le Mans* crew shot for months without a script, which explains a lot. But the film feels repetitive in places and there are some cheesy documentary tropes, such as the interviewees all being filmed in front of the same weathered tarpaulin, and being asked to give long, meaningful stares into the camera.

It's an okay documentary about a flawed movie. But like *Le Mans*, you should go see it anyway.

**BEN OLIVER**

*Steve McQueen: The Man and Le Mans* will be in cinemas nationwide from 20 November. Be quick!



McQueen with first wife Neile on the set of *Le Mans*



NIGEL SNOWDON



*A leap forward in reverse parking.*



## NEW FORD **FOCUS**

### ➤ **Active Park Assist**

How do you park in a space you can't even see? Trust the new Ford Focus. It can find even the most elusive spot, then assist you to park in it, whether it's parallel or even reverse parking. Just one of the many ways that the new Ford Focus can help you go further. [ford.co.uk/newfocus](http://ford.co.uk/newfocus)

Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the New Ford Focus Range: urban 32.1-74.3 (8.8-3.8), extra urban 49.6-91.1 (5.7-3.1), combined 41.5-83.1 (6.8-3.4). Official CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 159-88g/km.

The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results (EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008), are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

Active Park Assist is standard on Titanium X and available as an optional extra on Zetec, Zetec S and Titanium.



**Go Further**



# Decoded: Volkswagen's corporate shake-up

After dieselgate VW took action, setting heads rolling and ripping up its structure and plans. Here's what the group looks like now. **By Phil McNamara**



## PORSCHE

Porsche is the mastermind of this trio, which coalesces around the sports car and mid-engined platforms. The latter is MSB, which houses its powerplants behind the front axle, and comes with rear- and all-wheel drive. Next year's new Panamera will introduce the modular platform, which will also be used by Bentley. While next year's Audi A8 goes it alone, future limo generations – and VW Phaeton – could be wise to switch to MSB, and maybe even the A6 too...

## BENTLEY

Though it shares V8 and W12 engines with Audi, the next-generation Continental GT and the production version of the two-seat Speed 6 coupe (below) will be spun off Porsche's MSB chassis



## BUGATTI

The Molsheim operation is at full steam preparing for 2016's Veyron successor, reconfiguring the workshop, adapting logistics and showing the new super sports car to potential customers (for more see page 75)

## THE SPORTS GROUP

## THE NEW GROUP STRUCTURE

The car brands (and Ducati) are divided into three pillars – volume, sport, premium – with commercial vehicles and trucks separate entities. The intention is to give the brands more autonomy to speed up decision-making

## THE NEW GROUP BOSS

Matthias Müller

The ex-Porsche chief knows VW's multi-marque maze inside out. One key early move is to review all major investments, such as a Chinese dual-clutch factory or a new sports car for VW/Audi/Porsche. While seeking to drag VW's reputation from the mire, he will also step up the plug-in hybrid roll-out



## THE VOLUME GROUP



## VW

Common hardware has shaped each pillar, with the volume brands united around the front/transverse engine MQB 'toolkit' (above), with VW engineers leading its development

## THE NEW VW BOSS

Herbert Diess

Famed as a 'kostenkiller' at BMW, Diess only joined as VW brand chief in July, with the brief to raise VW's 2.5% margin to 6% by 2018. Two months later, the world caved in. Perversely, the need for VW to change its culture and push through savings to pay for dieselgate may give Diess more leeway to be radical



## SKODA

The Czech outpost has made VW's returns look bad, partly by piggybacking VW's MQB development costs argued former CEO Martin Winterkorn. Skoda has grown to a six model line-up, to be boosted in 2016 by a midsize SUV based on the Tiguan. New boss is Bernhard Maier, ex-Porsche sales and marketing chief

## SEAT

Habitual loss-maker and weak link in the volume pillar, but Seat is investing to fill a Martorell plant which suffered due to the depressed Spanish market. Its Tiguan-based SUV (below) arrives in the spring, with three more models – including a new Ibiza based on the latest group toolkit – to follow by 2018



## THE NEW SEAT BOSS

Luca de Meo

Most recently Audi sales and marketing chief, but first came to VW's attention with his successful launch strategy for the Fiat 500, and its Mini-like focus on lucrative personalisation

## THE PREMIUM GROUP



## LAMBORGHINI

Why is Lamborghini not part of the sports division? 'Because they are doing their own thing well,' Matthias Müller has said. 'The Italians are our carbonfibre spearheads, it would be foolish to tamper with this. The upcoming Urus is based on the new full-size SUV platform, developed by Audi. I don't see an obvious Porsche connection.' The Urus (above) is due in 2018

## DUCATI

Like Bugatti, another vanity purchase masterminded by former supervisory board chairman, Ferdinand Piëch, a lover of the Italians' artful motorcycles

## AUDI

The group's mainstream cash machine keeps Lamborghini under its wing, and the leftfield Ducati motorcycles and Italdesign (whose styling work supports all the brands). Its key toolkit is the MLB platform, which underpins the Q7/Cayenne/Bentayga; a big question mark is whether the next A4 switches from longitudinal engines to MQB, saving weight and about €600 per car



# HEAD TURNER MEETS HEART STOPPER

The new Lexus RC F



An exhilarating high performance sports car that was born on the race tracks. With a hand built 5.0litre V8 engine and 470bhp, the Lexus RC F is thrilling to drive, fusing muscular looks with leading edge motor-sport technology. Discover more at [Lexus.co.uk](http://Lexus.co.uk)



RC F

 **LEXUS**  
AMAZING IN MOTION

RC F prices start from £59,995. Model shown is RC F £60,620, including optional metallic paint at £625.

The MPG figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results. They are provided for comparability purposes, and may not reflect actual driving experience.

RC F fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures: urban 17.5 mpg (16.1 l/100km), extra-urban 36.2 mpg (7.8 l/100km), combined 26.2 mpg (10.8 l/100km), 251g/km CO<sub>2</sub> (37% BIK)

## WATCHES

# From around the time of Group B

Rallying's most infamous era gets wrist-mounted immortalisation, even down to the Lancia dial

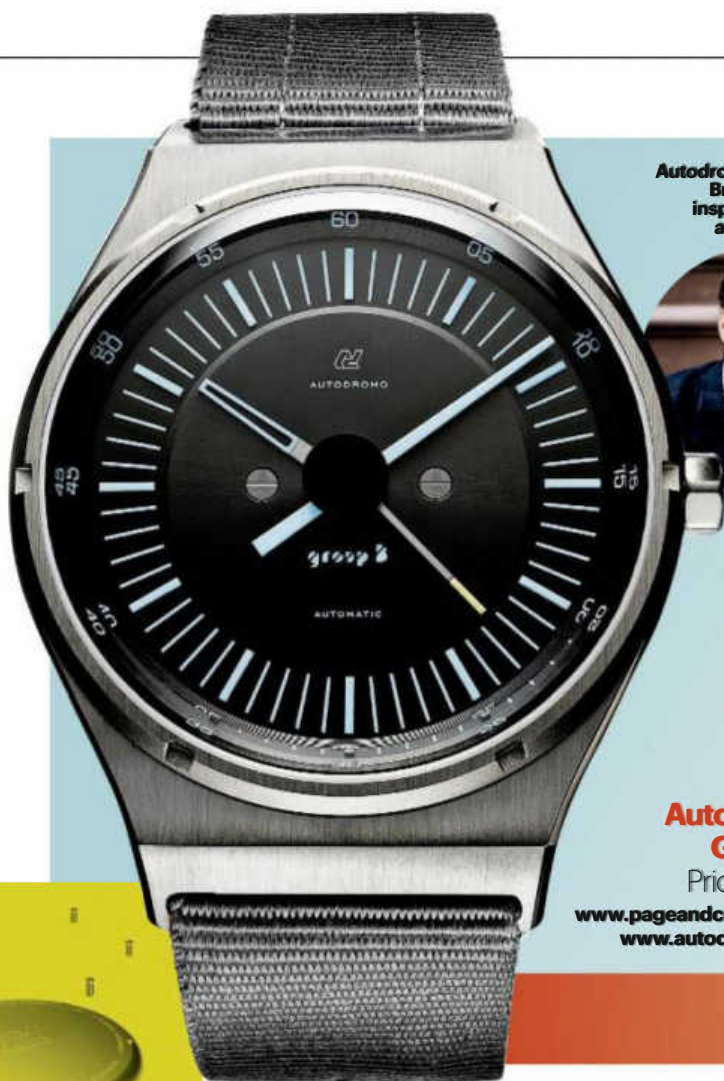
**YOU WOULD LIKE** Bradley Price, founder of Autodromo. He is one of us. He won't thank me for telling you this, but as a geeky 14-year-old from Evanston, Illinois, he visited London in 1994 and wore a cap with 'MANSELL' emblazoned across it in the Union Jack for the entire trip. By chance, he met Sir Stirling Moss in a model shop, and asked him to autograph the cap, despite it bearing another racing legend's name. Moss obliged, telling him that Schumacher would 'make mincemeat' of Mansell. Bradley still has the hat.

The company he founded in New York in 2011 makes watches inspired solely by cars. But it is plainly not because a marketing study told him to, or a car company paid him to. It's because like us, he spends more time thinking about cars and racing than is healthy, and has channelled that into a business.

His products, which include driving gloves and sunglasses, are thus pitch-perfect and super-credible. They are also affordable. Until now, his watches have largely been inspired by sports cars and watches of the '50s and '60s, but the latest is very different to anything from any other brand. The Autodromo Group B pays tribute to rallying's wildest era; one marked by insane performance, technological advancement, and tragedy.

No other watchmaker has yet attempted a retro '80s watch, but Bradley has got it right first time. The Group B's high-contrast dial is inspired by those in a Lancia 037 and comes in red, blue, yellow or white. Each watch comes in an aluminium box with two nylon straps: one grey, and one to match the dial, each with an Autodromo label inside which

Steel case, but movement is housed in a titanium capsule. Tough but lightweight



Autodromo founder Bradley Price: inspired by cars and cars only



**Autodromo Group B**

Price £690

[www.pageandcooper.com](http://www.pageandcooper.com)  
[www.autodromo.com](http://www.autodromo.com)

echoes those on a racing harness. The clever case design means the straps can be swapped without tools. They thread through a solid steel chassis, which holds a titanium capsule shielding the high-end Japanese Miyota automatic movement. The titanium is a tribute to Group B's advances in materials: it also makes this watch the lightest Autodromo has made.

Bradley launched the watch at this month's Salon QP watch show in London to a crowd pleased to have a watch that commemorates an era they can remember. Autodromo's designs often sell out quickly: like Group B itself, these might not last long.

**BEN OLIVER** @thebenoliver

## We hear

Juicy gossip from the CAR grapevine

**MASERATI'S** future model strategy is a moveable feast. The world fell in love with last year's **Alfieri concept** (pictured), and optimists expected it in 2016 with a roadster following a year later. But the **Levante SUV** is running late, and resource is currently being channelled into an **electric SUV** for

the **Chinese market** with an unnamed local partner.

So the Alfieri pair have been pushed back to 2018 and 2019. They will run the **3.0-litre V6 turbo** rated at 410 or 520bhp.

Today's **GranTurismo/Cabrio** must soldier on with a new infotainment system and the odd refresher until late 2019 or early 2020. Then we get a roomier **2+2-seater**



based on the Ghibli platform, with a bigger boot and a choice of **410bhp V6** and **3.8-litre V8 in 530bhp Sport and 600bhp MC flavours**. What about that rumoured MC12-style Birdcage supercar? 'Not right now,' says boss Harald Wester. 'No budget, no engineering capacity.'

Talking of budgets, **Wolfsburg** whispers suggest Volkswagen's cost of **fixing each EA189** diesel defeat device is around **€200** for software-only cases, and **€800** for software and



hardware. However, as CAR went to press, the contagion is threatening to spread to Audi and Porsche V6 diesel engines, and potentially some petrol engines...

CAR broke the story that secret talks were underway between **BMW and McLaren** to co-develop a new **BMW supercar** (above), mating a

750bhp German V8 with a British carbonfibre tub. Frank van Meel, head of BMW's M Division, has poured cold water on the story – for the simple reason he naturally wants his team to produce any future supercar in-house. Which avenue BMW will go down is still up in the air, but rumours suggesting a **supercar partnership with Lexus** are unfounded – at least according to one BMW board member who quipped 'only over my dead body'.



# EXPLORE NEW TERRITORY, FINANCE-WISE



1-litre to 1.6-litre  
PSA Peugeot Citroën  
1.2-litre three-cylinder turbo



**3 YEARS**  
**INSURANCE\***  
WARRANTY  
SERVICING  
CAR TAX\*  
ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

**4.9% APR**  
REPRESENTATIVE\*

**£1,200 DEPOSIT  
CONTRIBUTION\***



**PEUGEOT RECOMMENDS TOTAL** Official Fuel Consumption in MPG (l/100km) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km) for the 2008 Crossover Range are:  
Urban 47.1 – 67.3 (6.0 – 4.2), Extra Urban 65.7 – 85.6 (4.3 – 3.3), Combined 57.6 – 78.5 (4.9 – 3.6) and CO<sub>2</sub> 114 – 95 (g/km).

MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions. \*Representative 4.9% APR over 37 months. Terms and conditions apply, participating dealers only or visit peugeot.co.uk. Peugeot Motor Company PLC is acting as a credit broker and is not a lender. To finance your purchase we will only introduce you to Peugeot Financial Services, the exclusive provider of Just Add Fuel. A guarantee may be required. Finance provided by and written quotations available from PSA Finance UK Ltd t/a Peugeot Financial Services, Quadrant House, Princess Way, Redhill, RH1 1QA. Excess mileage charges may apply. \*The first year Road Fund Licence (RFL) is included in the on the road price. The Dealer will provide customers with a cheque equivalent to twice the current RFL cost. The customer must apply for years 2 & 3 RFL. Just Add Fuel (JAF) is subject to status. \*Minimum age 21, 25 or 30 on selected models, maximum age 75. Policyholder must have a minimum of 2 years NCD to use on the vehicle. All drivers must meet eligibility criteria including minimum 2 years' full UK licence, driving convictions/claims limits. Excesses apply. 3 years motor insurance is provided and underwritten by U.K. Insurance Limited, which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. Payments will vary according to age, post code and annual mileage. The costs of insurance, servicing and Roadside Assistance are included within the monthly cost of JAF Passport, but are provided on a monthly pay-as-you-go basis and can be cancelled at any time without penalty or affecting the remainder of the JAF Passport contract. Routine servicing included only. Excludes wear parts. \*£1,200 deposit contribution at participating dealers. This offer is not available in Northern Ireland. All offers available on qualifying vehicles ordered and registered between 01/10/15 and 31/12/15 or until such time as they may be withdrawn by Peugeot at its complete discretion. Information correct at time of going to press.

## PEUGEOT 2008 CROSSOVER

MOTION & EMOTION



PEUGEOT



# TECH.

The innovations transforming our driving world

## 5 technologies to save the diesel

Don't let VW's woes fool you into thinking diesel is dead. It's more efficient than petrol, and will get cleaner still

**S**HOULD the diesel engine be tossed onto the scrapheap? Headline writers shouldn't forget that all combustion engines produce nitrogen oxides. While diesel NOx is higher than petrol (Euro6 NOx limits allow 80mg/l for diesel and 60mg/l for gasoline), the roll-out of new NOx after-treatment systems will allow diesel to match gasoline.

Chris Brace, automotive propulsion professor at Bath university, believes today's 'after-treatments will fix emissions and air quality issues. When real driving emission tests are enforcing Euro 6.2 in 2017, the air quality issue will

be largely beaten. Then it's back to CO<sub>2</sub> business as usual.'

Of course, that's where denser diesel fuel has the edge, containing about 15% more energy than petrol, plus diesel engines are about 20% more efficient. The downside is that diesel produces 2.65kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per kilo burnt, compared to 2.3kg for petrol. However, since diesel consumes 25% less fuel than a gasoline engine, it emits 15% less CO<sub>2</sub>. And that'll be vital to help car makers avoid a €95 fine for every gram emitted over 95g/km – PER car sold – from 2021. Reason enough for the bean-counters to sanction these NOx-beating technologies...

### 1 Exhaust after-treatments

Depending on the engine and vehicle size, different exhaust gas treatment (EGT) systems will be employed. Bosch has developed modular systems that incorporate a NOx Storage Converter ahead of a double selective catalyst reduction (SCR). The NOx trap appears to be tailor-made for many urban

traffic situations due to the lower temperature limit of its operating range. The first SCR, with AdBlue urea injection, combined with a diesel particulate filter (DPF) reduces low temperature urban exhaust emissions; a second, optional, SCR further cleans the high temperature exhaust gases, if necessary.

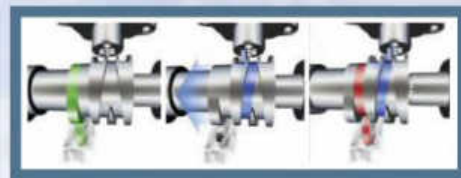
### 2 Variable compression ratio

Because compression ratio (CR) is fixed across all operating boundaries it is a compromise. A high CR is used for cold ambient start and engine warm-up – improving starting, hydrocarbon/carbon monoxide (HC/CO) reduction and increased thermal efficiency. With increased in-cylinder temperature at the start of injection the rate of ignition is improved and stabilised, resulting in more

complete combustion and reduced HC/CO emissions. It is also used for part load in warm engine conditions to increase the combustion's thermal efficiency, decrease CO<sub>2</sub> emission and fuel consumption. A reduction in CR is needed as the engine load increases to protect components. For higher loads the amount of fuel and cylinder charge is increased along with cylinder peak pressure.



Variable CR con rod switches compression ratio from 13:1 to 17:1



### 3 Cylinder deactivation

Today's Golf already has cylinder deactivation – but on its 1.4 petrol (above). But for diesel? Tula Technology's Dynamic Skip Fire (DSF) uses audio electronics-derived digital signal processing to continuously vary the number of cylinders firing at any one time, controlling diesel exhaust temperature independent of engine load. Diesel after-treatment devices have a relatively narrow window of temperatures in which they are effective.

A common problem with NOx traps and SCR catalysts is that, at low loads, the exhaust is actually too cold for the after-treatment devices to work at peak effectiveness. Running DSF allows control of the exhaust temperature so the systems operate more effectively. As a separate but related advantage, with DSF it is easier to achieve the temperatures and equivalence ratios required to regenerate a particulate filter.

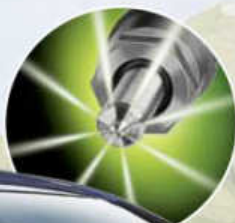




## 4 Injection systems

Currently the trend is upping injection pressures, with increased costs for stronger components such as block, head, pistons and bearings. Increased line pressure, more powerful fuel pumps and more sturdy injectors all add cost. Minimising these developments helps contain costs. So, in the longer term, Delphi is working on stoichiometric diesel combustion of 14.4:1 compared to petrol's 14.7:1 (stoichiometric is

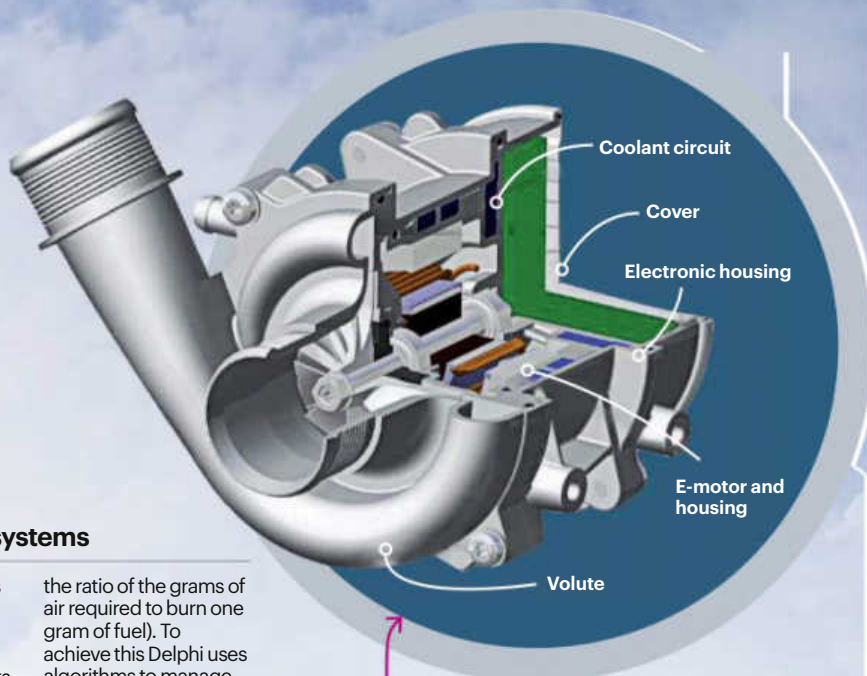
the ratio of the grams of air required to burn one gram of fuel). To achieve this Delphi uses algorithms to manage exhaust gas recirculation to prevent sooting and incomplete combustion, allowing a simpler and cheaper three-way catalyst to be used that eliminates NOx, hydrocarbon and CO2. First applications by 2020.



## 5 Electric turbochargers

The latest electric AirCharger (eAC) from Pierburg (above) uses 12v or 48v to spin the auxiliary turbo to maximum boost within 220-230 m/secs, bridging the gap normally associated with turbo lag caused by low engine load and speed. This improves engine

efficiency at low engine speeds, assisting in bringing the selective catalyst reduction (SCR) to operating temperature quicker, reducing emissions and boosting fuel economy by 3-5%. First application on a small capacity diesel, in 2017-2018.



VW may have cheated the test, but the diesel technology is sound, and fast improving



WORDS: IAN ADCOCK ILLUSTRATION: AERFORM

## Download lowdown

The monthly test bench for in-car apps



### ROAD TRIP LITE

£Free/App/Android

**What is it?** Mileage and mpg tracker

**How it works:** When you re-fuel, put in mileage, litres, price. It computes the rest

**Cool feature:** Graphs track your mpg

**Usability:** Simple, logical. Falls down if someone else re-fuels; if you switch to €s all previous figs switch to €s

**Rating:** 6/10



### CUVVA

£Free/App/Android

**What is it?** Insure a car for as little as an hour

**How it works:** Enter your licence details, reg, value and pic of car you're borrowing, duration of cover, then pay via app

**Cool feature:** Choose from 1, 2, 3, 4 or 24 hours of cover

**Usability:** Ultra-simple, took under 10mins including inputting licence/payment details for first time. Quoted £26.53 for a 40-year-old in CAR's Golf R for 24 hours

**Rating:** 9/10



### EVEL KNieVEL

£1.49 Apple

**What is it?** Recreate daredevil's famous stunts

**How it works:** Progress from jumping rattlesnakes at Moses Lake right up to Evel's famous Caesar's Palace fountain jump

**Cool feature:** Earn points to boost Evel's strength, agility... and charisma!

**Usability:** Logical, only two buttons, and with on-screen prompts to help the feckless

**Rating:** 8/10



### GEOCACHING

£Free/App/Android

**What is it?** 21st century treasure hunting

**How it works:** Geocachers hide caches globally, log their locations and upload clues. Use GPS to get close, then follow clues

**Cool feature:** Mystery caches can involve complicated puzzles. £7.99 upgrade essential

**Usability:** Easy to use – and to hoodwink your kids into epic road trips

**Rating:** 9/10



## Does it work?

### Tesla's Autopilot

**S THE TESLA** Model S truly autonomous? Unfortunately you still can't simply tell it to take you to work in the morning. But Autopilot now allows the Model S to drive itself along a motorway entirely unaided. The longest uninterrupted stretch of motorway in the UK runs from the bottom of the M6 in the Midlands to Glasgow, 320 miles away, or almost exactly the range of a Model S 85D. Surely the ability to travel that distance without requiring the (human) driver to touch the throttle, brake or steering wheel makes the Model S our first autonomous car. But does it work?

Not entirely, says Elon Musk. Autopilot is part of the new 7.0 version of Tesla's operating system, and the company is open about the fact that much of it is still in 'beta'. That means it isn't finished and needs testing to iron out the bugs. Tesla's wealthy, early-adopting customers are the guinea pigs, if they've paid the £2100 for Autopilot on a new Model S, or £2500 to enable it after downloading 7.0 to an existing car.

All Teslas built after September 2014 have the requisite hardware. That's around 60,000 cars, and this is Tesla's killer advantage. Even if a small fraction of those have Autopilot enabled, Tesla will have easily the biggest self-driving fleet: far bigger than Google's. Each car sends what it has learnt back to HQ (anonymously),

turbocharging the rate at which Tesla can improve its software and increase the autonomy.

Active cruise control will either maintain your chosen speed, or lock onto the car in front and brake yours to a standstill if required. Nothing new there. But Autopilot's Autosteer function now uses the forward camera to keep you between lane markings, if it can see them. Put the two together and voila! Autonomy. But only on motorways for now, Tesla warns, and you should be ready to take control again, so no reading the paper. I tested the US version that will even change lanes hands-free with just a flick of the indicators, but European regulators require you to be at least touching the wheel for that. For now...

**BEN OLIVER** @thebenoliver

#### DID IT WORK?

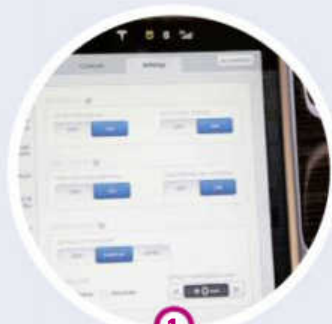
**Rejoice!** The fairly autonomous car is finally here. Autopilot coped with the rush-hour M4 with aplomb. Crucially, I trusted it. Ignoring Elon, I tried it off the motorway too and it took longer to lose the plot than I'd expected. And the first 'learning-based' refinements to Autopilot will be downloadable within weeks.



Our Ben tackles the M4 hands-free. How long before he can focus on the central screen rather than the road?



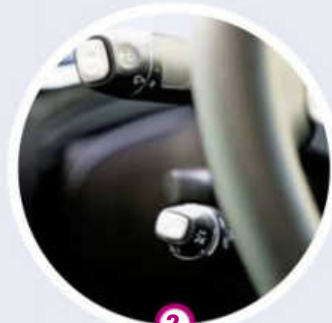
#### 4 steps to driving autonomy



1

##### MAKE LIKE A PILOT

Engage active cruise control and set your chosen maximum speed



2

##### ASK THE CAR TO STEER

Once the display shows that the camera has spotted lane markings on either side, a couple of tugs on the cruise lever engages Autosteer



3

##### WHY CHANGE LANES YOURSELF?

If the 360-degree ultrasonic sensors say it's safe, Auto Lane Change does what the name suggests, hands-free – but not in Europe yet

4

##### THINK OF SOMETHING TO DO

You may get bored. If you want to take control, just take the controls



# WE SORT THE FINANCE YOU CHOOSE THE CAR

Buying a new car is exciting, deciding how to pay for it isn't - which is why we created Halifax Car Plan Extra.

Our new car finance for Halifax Current Account customers means you can sign into Online Banking, use the calculator to find out how much you could borrow instantly - and then choose a plan which suits.

Once you've applied and been accepted, we'll transfer the money direct to the dealer, it's as easy as that.

Available to Halifax current account customers of at least three months, registered for Online Banking aged 18+ and UK resident. Borrow between £3,000 – £60,000. Vehicle must be sourced through selected dealer. Lending subject to status.

 Visit [halifax.co.uk/carfinance](http://halifax.co.uk/carfinance)



THOMAS  
MÜLLER

Inductive charging tech could be the future for EVs, as long as it doesn't fry your cat

modify their driving ahead of time, as a good driver does. This collaboration between different vehicles won't be easy – we are all competitors. Finding the right model for the exchange of anonymous data is key.

► **OUR CLOUD** technology will improve the user experience. There's potential for over-the-air active safety. If somewhere there is an emergency-braking situation, or grip is low, why not communicate that to the cloud and on to other cars in the area? Information from the cloud will also pre-condition a PHEV car in the right way to better deploy its available energy, using geo-fencing on zero-emission zones for example,

so the car knows to preserve charge and to shut off the combustion engine.

► **HMI TOOK** a big step when Apple introduced the iPhone. iDrive was the automotive equivalent of computers' mouse and menu system. It worked because people understood the logic from their computers. Now consumers have learned touch-screen interaction from their smartphone. A touchscreen gives you two dimensions for control and more flexibility. The menu structure is much flatter too, more intuitive. The next stage is proximity sensing. In navigation the screen would show only the map, bringing in the menu and making the relevant part of it bigger as you reach for it, improving accuracy.

► **PEOPLE TALK** about a future battery electric car [Volvo will launch a mid-size BEV with a 325-mile range by 2019] and everybody talks about inductive [wireless] charging. The vision for this technology is very desirable, certainly in the premium segment. You arrive at your garage and step out, the car positions itself perfectly over the charging coil and that's it, you're charging, maybe while also downloading a software update. It's possible but there are cost and safety issues. What if the car is charging and your cat walks between the car and the charger? It's a very unfortunate situation!

INTERVIEW BY **BEN MILLER**

## The next big things by Volvo's e-tech guru

**Dr Thomas Müller**, vice president for electrics, electronics and e-propulsion, Volvo, holder of a PhD in nuclear physics and ex-BMW infotainment boffin, gazes into his crystal ball

**CONNECTIVITY IS THE** key to autonomous driving. From an HMI perspective it's clear you need a safe and intuitive method of bringing the driver in and out of the control loop. In the near future we will not see cars without steering wheels, and people gazing out of the window. You will see autonomous driving on some roads, so how

do we do the handover? If you're going to allow people to read or browse the internet, maybe it's via a programmable cockpit. So the car is in control and you're checking your emails on the display. Two miles ahead of the handover there's a notification. With 30 seconds to go the emails fade out and the driving instruments return.

► **IN THE** future there will be a great need for data exchange between multiple vehicles. You can buy static information from the mapping companies, and the cars will have sensors, but they will also need real-time dynamic data about what is happening on the electronic horizon. They need to be able to predict and to

## FRESH THINKING: Toyota's in-car robot Meet Kirobo. He lives in your cupholder

### What's the big idea?

Kirobo is an experiment in human/robot interaction, featuring voice and facial recognition software developed by Toyota. He actually started life as a robot astronaut, and was sent to the international space station to cheer up Japanese station commander Koichi Wakata. Now he's planning to try to cheer you up too, while you're stuck in traffic.

### Why does Toyota think we need cheering up?

You're driving a Toyota, for a start. More crucially, studies have shown that drivers in a bad mood drive too fast, too close to the car in front and have more accidents.

### How does Kirobo plan to overcome that?

He has a facial recognition camera just above one of his eyes, and can identify expressions, so if you're frowning he'll try to engage

you in a bit of helium-voiced chat. He can understand speech (as long as you're Japanese) and has a database of phrases.

### So, will Kirobo be standard on the next Auris?

Sadly not, but he's part of a serious experiment to test how your car could interact with you. He may be able to interact with your sat-nav and music too. If you haven't already hurled him out of the window, that is.



Kirobo started life in space. It may not be the last flight he takes





## BE ONE WITH IT

Be one with your tyres, and the road will be one with you.



OFFICIAL  
PARTNER



### ventus S1 evo<sup>2</sup>

#### Luxury that never compromises safety

With an advanced VAI system that allows drivers to track vehicle alignment and aerodynamic sidewalls that minimise noise and vibration levels, the ventus S1 evo<sup>2</sup> delivers the promise of performance and enhanced fuel efficiency.





# FIRST DRIVES.



10 cars tested, starring Porsche 911, Toyota Mirai, Lexus GSF, Ferrari 488 Spider & a four-way warm-hatch shootout



New-look rear features '3D' lamps, a new air intake and one rather juicy deployable spoiler



**T**O CALL THE 2016 911 a mid-life facelift is like saying gender-swapping boxing promoter Frank Maloney popped in for a nip/tuck. In exchanging its legendary naturally aspirated flat-six for twin-turbo power Porsche has subjected its most precious asset to life-changing surgery. Life-changing is one thing, life-threatening quite another. This is our first chance to check the 911's post-op pulse.

Our canary yellow test car is a Carrera S with an exclamation mark. Make that two exclamation marks. It runs on the widest available rims, 20-inchers shod with 245/35 rubber in the front and with even lower section 305/30 Pirelli P Zero tyres in the back. Also on board are carbon ceramic brakes, rear-wheel steering together with active anti-roll bars, extra-loud dual-mode exhaust, double-clutch PDK transmission and the game-console-inspired Sport Chrono pack. Seating is via one-size-fits-some racing buckets which grab you by the hip

and by the shoulder like a professional wrestler. I snap the banana yellow belt into its buckle, select Normal on the drive mode selector and fire up the engine, the sound of which could make or break this car. The five round dials and the small touch-screen monitor spring to life. We're ready to go.

Porsche built its first turbo engine in 1974. It was the mean heart of an even meaner car – lazy, explosive, melodic and deafening, dependent on where you were on the rev ladder. Four decades later, the engine has matured from a simple muscle-building tool to a sophisticated all-purpose weapon, producing 414bhp despite having shrunk from 3.8 litres to 3.0. With 369lb ft of torque available at a much more leisurely engine speed, and fuel economy improved by about 10%,

surely this will be a case of love at first drive? Yes and No. The left side of the brain is fire and flames for the benefits of progress. The right side of the brain, however, is not entirely convinced. Some of the noises the new engine makes are irritatingly different – the way it unravels grunt and urge is less spectacular. It changes the character of the car.

Hearing is the sense sports cars stimulate with particular intensity, and the outgoing normally aspirated flat-six is a master musician that always got you hooked the very first time the gearlever struggled through the gate. Its riveting sound pattern reflected its exotic engineering concept. Because of the horizontally opposed pistons, it needed voluminous lungs and a free-flow ▶

## PORSCHE 911 CARRERA S

# You can breathe now

Call it cute, call it cynical, but Porsche has slipped a 911 revolution under the radar of a mid-life facelift. Purists are holding their breath, but the new turbo 911 isn't. We drive it

Words Georg Kacher | Photography Charlie Magee







Whatever the nature of the engine, it's still out there beyond the rear axle, living up to the dynamic legend

breathing system to accelerate the mixture's long travel from the air filter to the combustion chambers. The routing of the exhaust had to follow similar principles, and the ability to rev freely was required to maximise the momentum. The resulting sound was an unmistakable raucous chainsaw working noise which flapped its phonetic wings loudest above 5500rpm, and even when noise regs forced a change the motor's tone of voice altered only like that of a boy turning into a man. It always remained true to its basic phonetic code.

The new 911 – call it 991.2 – has a different engine melody. Not nearly as different as JS Bach is from Loussier's Play Bach but it is, to use a technical term, remixed. Take the idle speed, which used to be a prelude to the Wagnerian thunder that was about to follow. It is more subdued now, socially more acceptable in a neighborhood keen of hearing, and bang in line with the strictest dBA regulations. Now stroke the pedal but don't yet pump it to turn up the volume a notch or two, and listen to the turbos probing their vocal chords, like a pair of highly tuned yet neatly muffled elevator motors. More throttle please to encourage the whole orchestra to kick in, dense and incredibly disciplined, loud but not blaring, a tightly woven musical act. It's a modern

tune, metallic yet extremely well coordinated, composed but emphatic enough, a new family member joining the family conversation. Only when you rev it harder – there are now an extra 500rpm to unspool – the familiar 911-speak will become truly intense and unmistakable. More Kaufmann than Villazon, yes, but definitely still one of the greatest living tenors.

We would be more critical of the new engine had Porsche not previously established an enclosure for the die-hards who adore the fine art of retro-engineering. These in-house skunkworks will continue to develop classics like the Cayman GT4, 911 GT3/RS and next year's stealth 911R. In a small in-house sports car reserve run by Andreas Preuninger, non-turbo engines are encouraged to live on, as are manual transmissions and only the most basic driver aids. Purists can sleep tonight.

For the rest of us the new Carrera S (and the models that will follow) offers other tangible benefits at the price of a mildly tweaked personality. The key numeric advantages for the PDK-equipped model are 3.9sec for the 0-62mph sprint rather than 4.1, an average consumption of 36.5mpg instead of 32.4, and a 2mph higher top speed of 193mph. These data bring the Porsche even

## Porsche 911 Carrera S

- > **Price** £85,857
- > **Engine** 2981cc 24v biturbo flat-six, 414bhp @ 6500rpm, 369lb ft @ 1700-5000rpm
- > **Transmission** Seven-speed PDK auto, rear-wheel drive
- > **Performance** 3.9sec 0-62mph, 193mph (limited), 36.5mpg, 174g/km CO2
- > **Weight** 1420kg
- > **Onsale** Now (for 2016 delivery)



Our Georg resplendent in colour-coded yellow seatbelt, feeling for shift paddles that are too short

closer to rivals such as the Mercedes AMG GT-S or the BMW M6 Competition. But since they don't make the 2016 911 feel subjectively faster, the electronic driver aids have been asked to delve a little deeper into their box of tricks – with debatable success.

Although the 911 has yet to be introduced with a designated eco programme for engine and transmission, the CO2 chasers did have a say in the calibration of the new Carrera S driveline. While start/stop is a given these days, this one cuts the engine early on the approach to a stop. The PDK transmission now features a coasting function which steps in when you lift off in certain driving conditions, but sadly not in Sport or Sport plus. Also conceived to save fuel at a leisurely pace is the virtual 'between





The best infotainment interface ever seen in a 911. And praise doesn't get any fainter than that

When you think of all that plumbing it's an ace feat of packaging. Intercoolers stuffed into rear wings

## UP AGAINST

**BETTER THAN**  
**Mercedes AMG GTS**  
Still has that unique rear-engine balance

**WORSE THAN**  
**911 Carrera S 991**

For now, at least, we prefer nat asp

**WE'D BUY**  
**911 GT3**

No turbo, no compromise, nothing can touch it



Steering-wheel-mounted overboost button makes leap from 918. Not quite Ferrari's *manettino*, but...



Sport, Sport Plus and Individual. Depending on specification, this is an invitation to mix and match one's favourite blend of drivetrain, suspension and exhaust settings. As before, the super-aggressive Sport Plus is only suitable for the racetrack or for timed hillclimbs, while Normal is a synonym for not interested. So, for maximum driving pleasure, stay in Sport and also try PSM Sport, which offers an interesting middle ground between guardian angel on duty and gone fishing. On cold rubber in single-digit temperatures, PSM Sport can be tantamount to Game Over, so it is absolutely essential to warm up the tyres before putting on the Hamilton mask. Like all 911s, the new C2S is quite sensitive to tyre pressures; minor adjustments can work wonders for the front end grip. Predictably, the ride quality deteriorates in proportion to the surface quality. The sports suspension, which stiffens up springs and dampers while lowering the ride height by 20mm, is in this context therefore a questionable extra.

Up to 30mph, the 911's new rear-wheel steering tightens the turning circle by 400mm. Above 50mph, it enhances the directional stability. Nice to have, sure, but like the active anti-roll system, not an essential option. How about the standard manual transmission and the carbon-ceramic brakes, you ask? Well, despite the reduced effort and improved precision, the seven-speed 'box ▶

gears' position, which manages the clutches of two neighbouring ratios until the driver decides whether to press on or back off. Even though the chip-controlled servants work smoothly and discreetly, committed users may be more impressed by the GT3-inspired reversed gearlever action when in manual mode. From now on, pull commands upshifts and push orders downshifts, Le Mans-style. Even though we are in the two-pedal version, the in-built synthesiser is happy to pretend heel-and-toeing and that *blat-blat* splutter under trailing throttle. Apparently, customers love such gimmicks. The same

audience is bound to adore the overboost button in the steering wheel which arms all systems for the next 20sec. A kickdown function would have had the same effect, but marketing went for the full works including a hero mode countdown display in the binnacle to the right of the over-size rev counter.

That rotary switch with push button has been transferred from the 918 to the 911. It's not as versatile as Ferrari's *manettino*, and it won't let you dial in a softer damper setting before tackling a bumpy C-road, but it does tweak the car's main traits in four stages labelled Normal,





Watch it in reasonable definition on a medium-sized screen. The 21st century, 911-style



still is a challenge to dexterity, and the top four ratios are long enough to close that hole in the ozone layer all by themselves. True, those awesome multi-compound brakes cost as much as a royal mansion in Bangladesh, and they can be noisy when cold or stressed. In terms of effort, modulation and stopping power, however, the four yellow calipers under pressure are as physical as the world's twistiest rollercoaster.

Inside the 911 cabin it's harder to spot the progress. You still need a coupe-shaped pseudo key to open the door, to start the engine via the ignition lock left of the steering column, and to remote-pop the bootlid. A modern magic wand entry system remains conspicuous by its absence, along with a head-up display, certain driver assistance features offered elsewhere, or less fussy ergonomics. Fact is, progress at Porsche typically manifests itself in other departments.

The upgraded connectivity is a big step forward for 911, however, if not a huge leap for mankind. After all, even seasoned index fingers still struggle with the tiny chocolate bar push buttons and the improved touchscreen which now boasts proximity sensors and up-to-date software. We like the new smaller-diameter multi-functional sports steering wheel, although it could do with longer shift paddles. Improvements are in the works, but they won't come to market until the



all-new Porsche 992 debuts in 2018 followed by a hybrid variant in late 2019.

Especially when compared to the last-of-line 911 GTS, the new Carrera S is less of a hardcore sports car and more of a wiry grand tourer. One look at the torque curve of the twin-turbo engine tells it all. While power delivery is almost eerily linear from idle speed to 6500rpm, the torque curve runs, as if drawn with the help of a ruler, absolutely flat all the way from 1700 to 5000rpm. That's what artificial aspiration does for you, and that is where the 414bhp unit breaks new ground. Learning the virtues of this high-efficiency boxer takes a bit of time. At the end of the day, it is the mix of Sport and Manual modes that does the trick, together with certain mental adjustments. Sport is quite dedicated even with the gear selector stuck in Drive, but Manual is much more involving still. The driving technique aligns with every hour spent behind the wheel.



It's what all the fuss is about, but the twin-turbo six has been disguised as a 1980s ghetto blaster

First, you abandon superfluous downshifts. Next, you time upshifts less and less impatiently. Eventually, the emphasis will have shifted from nursing high revs to riding big momentum. This description may be somewhat black and white, but then the degree of assimilation is not merely parenthetical.

Older 911s were raw *wah-wah* tools demanding an almost digital driving style: give it stick, brake hard, shift down one or two gears, turn in with a vengeance, easy on the throttle toward the apex, then pedal to the metal again. The sold-out GT3 is still such a shirt-sleeved type, a gifted figure-skater, quite loose yet in total control when it matters. In contrast, Carrera S, which has ceded that last inch of pre-turbo throttle sharpness yet not succumbed to turbo lag as such, prefers wider radii, smoother blacktop, faster turf, a more balanced tempo. Its electric steering, the arrival of which caused almost as much angst among Porscheophiles as this turbo era, seems to suit the 991.2 better, its virtual heft seeming more malleable. Maybe we're simply adjusting. Maybe we simply need to acknowledge that adjustment is part of life.

But make no mistake, this is a wonderful car in its own right. You may play silly boy when you must, but in truth this is a 911 for grown-ups. That's grown-up as in a consciously consummate pace, a precise and progressive line, an intuitive interaction between input and response. The 911.2 is not only quicker, faster and more frugal than the model it replaces, it's also a more rewarding drive, as long as you prefer fluidity, balance, style and tactility over brashness and bravado. Which is another way of saying that it is more accessible and more forgiving. It moves the game on in an inevitable direction which leaves ample room for all those upcoming back-to-the-roots Porsches whose predecessors we haven't, in all honesty, quite got over yet. Kicking an addiction takes time. Eighteen years on we've only just got over the shock of the 911's shift to water-cooling! 🚗

## LOVE

Good-looking, built to last, supreme dynamics, street cred, wide range

## HATE

Almost too sensible for a 911, ride/composure on rough roads, outmoded ergonomics

## VERDICT

They haven't spoiled it, but they've made it grow up. Boo!



**WATCH THE VIDEO!**  
See Ben Barry putting the new 911 through its paces on our interactive iPad edition





# Efficient performance.

## WARRANTY-FRIENDLY UPGRADES FOR BMW i8.

Trust the leading BMW tuner to take the BMW i8 to the next level. Enhanced aerodynamics, lower suspension and larger diameter, wider, forged alloy wheels are all it takes to turn this BMW into a true AC Schnitzer. See our website for details, or call us for your nearest AC Schnitzer dealer.



Carbon fibre front spoiler elements enhance aerodynamics



Carbon fibre side skirts divert air flow around the rear wheels



Suspension lowered 20-25mm gives optimum dynamics with comfort



Wider, 21" diameter AC1 forged alloy wheels with individual paint



High level GT-style carbon fibre racing wing



Alloy pedal set and luxury floor mats complete the transformation



Warranty friendly  
**TÜV**  
approved





## TOYOTA MIRAI

# Stack to the future

Now Toyota, the arch-planet-saver behind the first hybrid, brings the fuel-cell car to your street (if you live in Swindon)

**H**YDROGEN HAS BEEN the fuel of the future for as long as anyone can remember. But now there are two – two! – hydrogen-powered cars in actual production. One is based on a previous-generation Hyundai soft-roader, which seems a slightly odd way of going about things; the other is this, the sensationally weird-looking, purpose-built Toyota Mirai four-seater saloon.

Mirai means 'future' in Japanese, which is nicely circular, though probably you're already wondering why the future has to be so ugly. Even excusing Toyota with the shock of the new – and some of the design is functional, those large triangular vents at the front feed the cooling system – surely it didn't have to be quite this... unconventional?

But let's not get distracted. This is Toyota making the same sort of technological leap of faith it made nearly two decades ago with the Prius,

except on a far grander scale – a Prius still relies on detonating petrol, after all. The Mirai's under-floor fuel-cell stack splits hydrogen in a chemical reaction that creates electricity and water. The former drives the front wheels via the same electric motor used in the Lexus RX450h; the latter is recycled to humidify the fuel-cells or jettisoned as the Mirai's only emission. There's even a button for ejecting it manually, to prevent the thing inappropriately widdling on your garage floor.

That this is one of the most advanced hydrogen fuel-cell systems yet created practically goes without saying. Assisted by the addition of the nickel-metal hydride battery pack from the latest Toyota Camry Hybrid – as in a conventional hybrid, this powers the car alone at low speeds and boosts acceleration when required – the Mirai makes 152bhp and 247lb ft, and can travel up to 312 miles between fill-ups. Refuelling takes about three minutes.

It drives with the usual eerie competence of an alternative-fuel vehicle. In fact, it's almost exactly like a particularly refined EV, with punchy rolling acceleration and slightly remote steering that's especially vague about the straight-ahead. Soft suspension gives a comfortable ride prone to light chop, while having all the major weight low down in the middle of the platform means it dispatches corners with deceptive sprightliness. You aren't going to be taking the H-bomb for a Sunday morning thrashing, but soon the only reminders you're



Interior leftover from *Star Trek VI: the Search for a Filling Station*. 'She cannae handle 152bhp, Cap'n!' etc

driving something really out of the ordinary come from the curious looks of innocent bystanders, the *Star Trek* shuttle interior, and the keening, artificially-generated noise – easily drowned out by the hi-fi.

Seem interesting? It is. Genuinely. And we should be mature about this and applaud Toyota for taking such a bold step when it expects just 50-100 European sales a year. The trouble is the same as it's always been: the infrastructure, and the money. £66k will buy you plenty of Tesla,

with far greater performance and more price-appropriate cabin quality. Yes, you'll wait much longer for a Model S to recharge, but currently there are just three Mirai-suitable UK hydrogen stations – in Heathrow, Hendon and Swindon – which doesn't sound like much of a day out.

More are coming, but you'll have to be a far-thinking and selfless private buyer indeed to join the hydrogen journey this early. We salute you.

**CJ HUBBARD** @ir\_427

## LOVE

Hydrogen power is no longer science fiction

## HATE

That the future has to look weird

## VERDICT

Totally convincing tech, no real way to use it. Yet



### Toyota Mirai

> **Price** £66,000 > **Engine** Toyota Fuel-Cell System, 152bhp, 247lb ft > **Transmission** single-speed, front-wheel drive > **Performance** 9.6sec 0-62mph, 111mph, 0.76kg of hydrogen/100km, 0g/km CO2 > **Weight** 1850kg > **On Sale** Now



SPECIAL CARS DESERVE A SPECIAL KIND OF FINANCE COMPANY...

TOP PRESTIGE  
AND CLASSIC CAR  
BROKER

2015



LeasingWorld  
AWARDS

ORACLE<sup>®</sup>  
F I N A N C E

If you're thinking of financing or refinancing a prestige, sports  
or classic car, put our award-winning service to the test:

08450 944 997  
[www.oraclefinance.co.uk](http://www.oraclefinance.co.uk)

Proud to be a Patron of



PLEASE NOTE: WE ARE A CREDIT BROKER AND NOT A LENDER. This means we act independently through a wide range of lenders to offer a broad and competitive choice of products and solutions. Oracle Asset Finance is not affiliated to any motor manufacturer. Please contact us for an individual finance quotation on any prestige or sports car. Finance & terms are subject to status. UK residents only. Oracle Asset Finance Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for the sale

## UP AGAINST

**BETTER THAN**  
**Toyota Chaser**

Un-super saloon and GSF forerunner

**WORSE THAN**  
**BMW M5**

It wrote the super-saloon rulebook

**WE'D BUY**  
**BMW M5**

Less kit, pricier, but dynamically sublime



## LEXUS GSF

## Limited slop differential

Errant and complicated the diff may be, but Lexus's M5 rival is a fascinatingly original super-saloon with more kit than *Knight Rider*

**S THIS A** case of being careful what we wish for? Every E-segment super-saloon now features a forced-induction V8 for power and efficiency gains versus a regular V8, but motoring journalists often criticise a turbo engine's lack of response, duff sound effects, and perhaps the evolutionary dead-end of ever-escalating power wars.

Well, Lexus has been listening, and it's given us a super-saloon with a naturally aspirated 5.0-litre V8; it's called the GSF, the fourth model in the F-for-Fuji-Speedway line after ISF, LFA and RCF. Prod the throttle and the response is instant; the GSF sounds – though artificially enhanced through the speakers in sportier driving modes – like it's fiendishly snorting fresh air through a rolled-up 20, and won't quit revving to 7100rpm.

But here's the price you pay: the GSF makes 471bhp and 391lb ft, down not only 81bhp and 111lb ft on the latest turbocharged BMW M5 (which revs to similar levels), but 28bhp down and just 7lb ft up on the *last* M5 that bowed a decade ago with a naturally aspirated V10.

So would you be big enough to look at the M5 and the Merc E63's wumping great outputs and tell your incredulous mates that 'nah, I went for something slower because it responds much more crisply to throttle inputs'? They'd think you mad.

Listen carefully and you can hear Lexus's European marketeers punching through their cubicles at this point. 'Told... You... So...!' And it is a tricky message for them to communicate. But I hope someone listens, because I spent a day

driving the GSF on autoroutes and twisty roads and thoroughly enjoyed it.

On those autoroutes you notice the cocooned refinement, the audio-snob quality of the Mark Levinson hi-fi, the glassy gearshifts, smooth engine, pillowy ride, excellent seats... You're a stressed exec, you just want to get home in soothing comfort; no problem.

But the GSF is also designed to satisfy long-way-home detours too. There's the big V8 with forged con-rods, titanium valves and sky-high 12.3:1 compression ratio; six-piston Brembo brakes; a body stiffened and braced; forged aluminium control arms and new rear suspension mounts; and a 1850kg kerbweight that shames that M5 to the tune of 95kg.

There's also a torque-vectoring differential. Lexus definitely wants you to know about this, because there are possibly more buttons for the diff than the climate control. Much like pressing a broken doorbell, you choose from Normal,





Understeer can scrub your sidewalls if you get too frisky. Put more air in!

#### Lexus GSF

► **Price** £69,995 ► **Engine** 4969cc

32v V8, 471bhp @ 7100rpm,

391lb ft @ 4800-5600rpm ►

**Transmission** Eight-speed automatic, rear-wheel drive ►

**Suspension** Double-wishbone front, multi-link rear ► **Performance** 4.6sec 0-62mph, 168mph (limited), 25.2mpg, 260g/km CO2 ► **Weight** 1850kg ► **On sale** Now

Slalom and Track modes, then settle back in wide-eyed, unrequited anticipation.

The different driving modes are more tangible: forget Eco with its soggy throttle (throttle response is almost the whole point here!) and go straight to Sport or Sport Plus. In the latter you get a huge central rev counter, exhaust sounds flowing through rear as well as front speakers, and even a window on the oil temperature, like the old days.

Charge down a twisting road and the steering – quick, precise, some palm-tickling feel, even – snaps to attention, and instantly snares your attention too. It jinks the GSF's nose with a deft lightness that belies both its still significant weight and the hulk of V8 nestled over the front axle; you immediately sense a playfulness, and even the extra weight in Sport Plus is nicely judged. Those 380mm stoppers give you confidence too, with their strong response and feel.

There's a helping of understeer when you lean hard on the front end – I'd be tempted to increase front tyre pressures, given the scrubbing on our sidewalls – but this is a well-balanced, secure chassis, one that feels pleasingly rear-biased when you keep your foot in.

And you will need to keep your foot in: the GSF suffers a foot-tapping, finger-drumming lethargy below 4000rpm, at which point a satisfyingly deep induction bellow erupts and you start to lose the M5 less quickly. Extend the V8 to



Smashing cabin with huge screen and mousey controller. More diff settings than radio stations

Suspension rather mushy but it all hooks up nicely once you're on the move



the redline and you'll get a strangely disjointed sound – like the engine Karaoke pouring from the speakers isn't reading the rev-counter subtitles – then tap on an aluminium gearshift paddle and one of eight gears slurs home; the 'box does the job, it's just rivals do that job better.

The diff, similarly, is more sloppy than slippery, sometimes locking, sometimes spinning the inside rear wheel like it's November 5th; seems to work better on faster corners than hairpins.

Despite all those diff settings, there's just one for the suspension. This could be a mistake because the GSF feels so cushy at a cruise, and you worry it might wallow when you chuck it about. It's true that there is some roll, but the GSF flows very nicely at speed. The result is a car that's quick and compliant, encouraging you to lean on its front tyres, and throw everything you can at the rears because, frankly, there isn't much in reserve; but to squeeze everything out of a car like this brings its own satisfaction.

Of course, the danger of a big ol' V8 is it'll neck fuel like someone's got the sakes in on Friday night, but Lexus has its own solution, switch-

ing between the Atkinson cycle when you're lounging about and Otto when you're legging it. The claims are for 25mpg and 260g/km to the M5's 28.5mpg and 231g/km.

If you're warming to the idea, consider this: the Lexus is £4k cheaper than the M5 at £69,995, but it's also lavished with standard equipment: semi-aniline leather, carbonfibre and alcantara trim, sat-nav with a 12.3-inch display, and all sorts of safety gear that should stop you driving into things and people, blinding oncoming traffic, veering chaotically from your lane and demolishing walls while parking. The only way to give your dealer more money is to spec the Mark Levinson hi-fi (£1000) and sunroof (£1105), and according to the man from Lexus you'd need to add £12,905 to the BMW to equalise the spec.

The GSF is not a perfect car, but it refreshingly ploughs its own furrow as if the opposition doesn't exist, creating a super-saloon as refined as it is exciting to drive. The opposition does, of course, exist, but the choice isn't the no-brainer it might seem on paper.

**BEN BARRY** @lamBenBarry

► **LOVE**  
Steering, engine response, refinement, ride

► **HATE**  
Gutless down low, sloppy diff, slow gearbox

► **VERDICT**  
Flawed, but a very likeable super-saloon alternative







SEAT LEON ULTIMATE

## Ultimate how?

Thirty two grand, and it's not even the most ultimate Leon. Orange wheels or not, it sounds crazy and is indeed crazy

**B**RAVE, USING THE word 'Ultimate' – especially when you then go and announce an even more powerful Cupra 290 model. And at a glance it's hard to see exactly what's ultimate about this particular 276bhp Cupra 280; though the (optional) orange alloys admittedly attract a surprising amount of positive attention, there's not so much as a bespoke decal on the outside, and the inside doesn't even get racier seats. But then, nor does it have air conditioning...

Ah-ha. So this is the closest buyers can get to the Leon that achieved a 7min 58sec Nürburgring lap and thus – briefly – became front-wheel-drive record-holder, the missing refrigeration part of a 19.4kg weight reduction programme that also includes binning four speakers, the centre armrest, rear air vents and under-seat storage. Following the Porsche precedent, Seat naturally charges more for less, and going Ultimate is a £4250 special order preference. That's double the price of the regular 'Sub8' pack, which already provides stonking Brembo brakes and 19in wheels. Super-sticky Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 2 tyres



### Seat Leon SC Cupra 280 Ultimate Sub8 Performance Pack with Orange Line

► **Price** £32,160 ► **On sale** Now, by special order ► **Engine** 1964cc 16v 4-cyl turbo petrol, 276bhp @ 5600rpm, 258lb ft @ 1700rpm ► **Transmission** Six-speed manual, front-wheel drive with electronic limited slip diff ► **Performance** 5.8sec 0-62mph, 155mph, 42.2mpg, 156g/km CO2 ► **Weight** 1376kg

remain a £460 extra, in either case.

Has the weight-loss surgery made a difference? Maybe. Maybe the 2.0-litre turbo-charged engine spools a touch faster without the drag of the air-con compressor, maybe the chassis is a tad fleetier of foot – but these are tiny detail changes over a car that's superb as standard, and already verging on the spectacular in ordinary Sub8 guise. Ultimately (ha ha) it still remains softer-edged than the razor-rad Renaultsport Megane Trophy-R. No bad thing if you're after a scorching fast point-to-point front-driver that can do docile well enough to take grandma shopping, but tricky to justify when it's cheaper to buy a Golf R.

If you must have a Leon and you've money to burn, it's the Brembos and those Michelins that are worthy – you'll stop later and turn-in harder than you'd ever previously thought wise, helping the electronically controlled diff make understeer seem like an ugly rumour from the distant past. Spend the change on track days and fuel.

CJ HUBBARD @ir\_427

- **LOVE**  
Super-fast, super-friendly, pseudo-hardcore
- **HATE**  
Waiting for the windscreen to demist in the morning
- **VERDICT**  
Just buy a regular Cupra Sub8, and enjoy

★★★★★

### MERCEDES-BENZ G63

## Going off-road, ready or not

**A**FTER ITS COMPREHENSIVE updating in 2012, the Mercedes G-class gets a gentle tickle for 2015: revised suspension and stability control, extra power, better efficiency for the G350d, mildly tweaked exteriors and interiors. A new range of 'Crazy Colours' are reminiscent of Mopar's 1970s Go-Mango, Sublime et al, minus the so-bad-it's-good punnery.

We're driving the G63, its 5.5-litre bi-turbo engine boosted by 17bhp to 563bhp. The sledgehammer motor dominates the experience. It sounds muscle-car fantastic – AMG has nailed the downsized, forced-induction thing – and slings the G down the road like *scheiße* off a shovel. Unsurprisingly, the ladder-frame dynamics can't keep up: there's pronounced body roll, early understeer, a lumpy ride and sticky steering that you use to make vague suggestions as to your direction of travel.

It feels like this 36-year-old hand-built icon wants to go off-road even when you don't, but when you do, the payback – as a switch into a G500 proved – is the ability to select low range, lock the front, centre and rear diff, and stoically, comfortably shrug off the kind of terrain you'd struggle to walk over.

A relic from another age the G may be, but Mercedes' range would be far duller without it. I'll have mine in Galactic Beam.

BEN BARRY @lamBenBarry

It has the aero characteristics of a cornflakes packet but can cross terrain like a drone



### Mercedes-Benz G63

► **Price** £131,675 ► **Engine** 5461cc 32v V8 bi-turbo, 563bhp @ 5500rpm, 561lb ft @ 1750-5000rpm ► **Transmission** Seven-speed automatic, four-wheel drive ► **Performance** 5.4sec 0-62mph, 131mph, 20mpg, 322g/km CO2 ► **Weight** From 2550kg ► **Rating** ★★★★★

**VERDICT** Born in the '70s. How is it still cool?



# LARINI

Driven to Perfection

MASERATI 3200GT 4200 GranSport GranTurismo MC Stradale Quattroporte Ghibli



MASERATI MC STRADALE,  
LARINI SPORTS SYSTEM

The finest high performance engine component systems for Maserati and prestige supercars - crafted to optimise performance, weight, acoustics and aesthetics.



MASERATI GRANTURISMO  
LARINI SPORTS SYSTEM

## SOUND PERFORMANCE

Maserati, Ferrari, Lamborghini, Audi R8, McLaren, Lotus, Aston Martin, Bentley

T 0870 777 9060 E [info@larinisystems.com](mailto:info@larinisystems.com) W [www.larinisystems.com](http://www.larinisystems.com)



What about those side scoops, do you like them? We had reservations, but they work in the flesh

## UP AGAINST

### BETTER THAN

#### Ferrari 488 GTB

Drop-top Spider is best of both worlds

### WORSE THAN

#### Ferrari 458 Speciale

Lag isn't the issue, high-rev thrills are

### WE'D BUY

#### Ferrari 488 Spider

The 458 is gone... deal with it

## FERRARI 488 SPIDER

# Special, if not actually Speciale

There's no elephant in the room, but there *is* a 458 – and the topless 488 can't ignore it. **By Mark Walton**

**T**HE NEW FERRARI 488 Spider eases itself into gigantic, monstrous speed like a greased frog slipping into a bath of warm milk. No splosh, no drama, just a sudden flash of slithery movement, and with a deep croak you're gone, up the road, disappeared. All it takes is a flex of your right foot, and the response is instant and overwhelming; a tsunami of torque scoops you forwards in an irresistible lunge. You sense the effortless nature of it, the lack of resistance, as though the weight of the car, the buffeting air, the raw physics of it all are casually swept aside by this titanic engine.

Compared to this slipperiness, the outgoing 458 Speciale was like riding a wasp through the gas cloud of an erupting volcano. The new 488 is a very different car.

Ach! Tsk tsk Mark! Ferrari will be mad with you for making that comparison! 'This is not the new Speciale,' they kept saying on the Spider launch, held about 80 miles south of Maranello. And they're right, of course: this isn't a hardcore, stripped-back racer-for-the-road, this is the Spider, the Hollywood Hills Ferrari, the Kings Road cruiser. In most territories (including the UK) it will account for more than half of 488s sold, and since the arrival of the folding hardtop (introduced in the 458 and continued

in the new car) it's been fast gaining popularity. And you can see why – it weighs only 50kg more than the 488 GTB, it has the same engine, the same 0-62mph time of 3.0 seconds, the same suspension, the same aluminium chassis... but if the sun shines you can drop the roof in 14 seconds. Spiders, Ferrari tells us, are driven further than coupes, on average, and Spider drivers are more likely to have their partners alongside for the trip. Usable and civilised, and nothing like the Speciale at all.

But hard luck Ferrari, because I'm going to continue making the 458 comparison, for three reasons. First, because the Speciale was the last Ferrari I drove, so I can't help myself; second, when I wrote that story (*CAR*, October 2014)



All you 458 owners out there will feel right at home. Manettino dial remains the key to the kingdom

### Ferrari 488 Spider

► **Price** £204,400 ► **Engine** 3902cc 32v twin-turbo V8, 661bhp @ 8000rpm, 560lb ft @ 3000rpm ► **Transmission** Seven-speed dual-clutch, rear-wheel drive ► **Performance** 3.0sec 0-62mph, 203mph, 24.8mpg, 260g/km CO2 ► **Weight** 1525kg ► **On sale** Now

I described it as 'Peak Ferrari', saying no car would ever match it, ever, from now to the end of time – a bold statement I feel I need to refer to. And finally, because the Speciale was – as every enthusiast knows – the final iteration of the normally aspirated V8, and the 488 Spider is a turbo. So is it better or worse?

Well, as I say, there's no escaping, it is different. Before I drove the new Spider, Ferrari gave us a technical briefing with a slideshow, and when you see the power and torque of this 3.9-litre turbo overlaid above the 458's 4.5-litre V8, it really hits home. The lines on the graph were like spaghetti – not just because peak power is up from 562 to 661bhp, and torque is up from 398lb ft to a whopping 560lb ft, it's also the way it delivers. Ferrari has gone to great lengths to eliminate lag in the 488, using fancy bearings and titanium alloys in the turbocharger. So





Much has been made of turbo character, but make no mistake, the 488 is an epically fast, proper Ferrari

peak torque – and I mean Bentley-style gobfufs of the stuff – is available from just 3000rpm. No wonder it takes off like a wet amphibian. And just as the engine characteristics are so different, that in turn changes the way you drive.

Some things haven't changed. The new Spider looks awesome – I had reservations about those side scoops when I first saw the pictures, but in the metal they look the business. The interior is a tweak on the 458, still brilliant and full of character. But drop that roof and you hear the changes as you start up – the engine has a deeper note, more like a burble than a

mechanical whirr. Once you're rolling, that burble becomes a trombone, rising with that immediate torque – and no, there is no lag. But the way the torque comes in has a strange effect – I found myself short-shifting, pulling the paddle earlier in the rev range to change up, riding the torque. In the 458 – and especially the Speciale – each gear was wrung out to the redline, just for the electrifying noise and drama you got at the higher revs. That kind of excitement is missing from the new turbo V8. Okay, it is mind-boggling fast – I mean, terrifyingly, brutally fast, borderline too fast on these roads, with corner after corner coming at you like targets in an arcade game. With so many hairpins, so much steering lock and so much torque, the traction control was blinking constantly, a silent indicator of the gargantuan torque available. I turned the traction control off with the little *manettino* switch on the steering wheel, and sure enough the 488 will oversteer out of any corner, anywhere, second or third gear,

uphill or downhill, eyes tight shut or wide open in terror. Thankfully, the gorgeously balanced and supple chassis, along with that super-fast and accurate steering, allow you to gather it up in a lovely arc, but you have to be seriously on your toes.

Again, this kind of casual oversteer is different to the outgoing 458, which would slide but only with more deliberation, more revs and more commitment. The 488 is a drift monster, as well as a cruiser.

So it's different – but what about better or worse? That's like asking, do you want to ride a wasp or a warm, buttered frog? Personally I'm a wasp man: I loved the 458 Italia because it was spine-tingling, in a way I don't feel the 488 Spider is; and I still stand by my claim that the Speciale was the best Ferrari for all eternity. But that doesn't mean the new 488 Spider isn't a mind-blowing experience, and a sensational car to drive. It simply isn't a 458.

@markwalton\_



And 14 seconds later it looks like this. Roof up or down, it's one beautifully proportioned Italian

**LOVE**  
Looks, interior, steering, chassis

**HATE**  
We miss the 458's chase to the redline

**VERDICT**  
Like the outgoing 458, but radically different to drive

★★★★★



# Warm hatch marriage material

The new Vauxhall Astra is desperate not to add to its collection of bridesmaid' dresses. To the church! **By Anthony French-Constant**



## Vauxhall Astra SRi

### Who giveth these wheels?

Always the bridesmaid, never the bride. This is the seventh iteration of a car serially fated to follow two truly great hatchbacks up the aisle. Waterproof mascara still a must for the spinster of this parish, then?

### Jasper Conran or giant meringue?

At first glance a safer study than the snappy, current generation three-door, but gently elegant for all that. Less chrome, less overt evidence of Adam's blade work, and C-pillar a cheeky homage to the first Focus.

### Tented village or village hall?

Huge improvement. Dashboard design is sharp-suited and clean, with elegant integration of the touchscreen. Switchgear functionally intuitive, but still too much chrome. Driving position ruined by console box lid elbow interruptus. Stacks of legroom astern.



Chiselled like a Venice Beach torso. But from Luton

## Ford Focus Zetec S

### Who giveth these wheels?

Every wedding needs an under-wired vamp to keep gently intoxicated fathers-in-law interested, and the Focus is now sufficiently long in the tooth to fit the bill. Still teaches more decorous youngsters a thing or two, though...

### Jasper Conran or giant meringue?

'It all comes out of a bottle these days', echoes the sotto voce snipe from the back of the church. Botox can never better the original, but this Aston Martin Smith grille treatment is a marked improvement.

### Tented village or village hall?

Increasingly tired-looking interior with unpleasantly swollen dashboard starting to feel low-rent. Surprised not to find basketball court markings on the floor. Fine driving position. Plenty of room in the back on a bruisingly firm bench.



Looks like an Aston, steers like a Focus. Result



To have and to  
hold, in sickness  
and in health,  
until a new PCP  
contract do us part



## Kia Proceed GT

### Who giveth these wheels?

Hopeless name masks interesting guest. Presents as the colonel's rebellious daughter but, a whiff of social Tourette's aside, may prove too genteel for outrage.

### Jasper Conran or giant meringue?

Crouching Tiger Hidden Drag Queen. Handsome Schreyer effort with a racy waistline and matronly hips. Some of the jewellery's a trifle paste, however, such as egg-crate running lights and sperm whale cough sweet-sized tail lamps.

### Tented village or village hall?

Interior a vast improvement on Kias of yore, but there's still sufficient acreage of elephant hide to host an extended safari. Switchable driver's dials a nice touch, but front of over-angled seat base unpleasantly intrusive. Rear chthonic.



'I'm crazy me, honest.  
Like a firecracker.  
Bonkers'

## VW Golf 1.4 TSI

### Who giveth these wheels?

Stifling a self-satisfied smirk as it carelessly lobs the bouquet over its shoulder en route to Mr Clooney's agreeable villa on the shores of Lake Como; the Golf has been wantonly stealing hearts for seven generations.

### Jasper Conran or giant meringue?

Not a tramp stamp in sight; a pocket-sized colossus of understated elegance and classy detailing. Cast-iron proof that you don't have to reach for the French curves or sheet-steel origami handbook to conjure a pretty, properly proportioned car.

### Tented village or village hall?

Stilton mature, painstakingly refined and superbly screwed together interior. Terrific driving position with the best forward visibility here. Plenty of room aft on comfortable seats. The only ergonomic glitch is awkward helm-mounted volume switchgear.



A quintessential  
English country  
landscape

MARK RICCIONI

CONTINUED...



CONTINUED...

## Vauxhall Astra SRI

### Small things on toast or posh caterers?

Astra at last leads the connectivity stakes by a clear length, with a wi-fi hotspot, both Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, and the company's OnStar concierge/emergency call/on-board diagnostics system fitted as standard. Bluetooth connectivity a doddle.



With these piano black plastics and connectivity you are really spoiling us

### Pol Roger Reserve or pink prosecco?

Quickest of the 148bhp triplets quoted here thanks to draconian pre-nuptial dieting. Eager engine with engaging soundtrack would be even more entertaining with a shorter gearlever throw and less clutch vagary.

### Crawl over her to get to you...

Great balance of ride comfort and handling agility, with a mild tendency to float over larger undulations. Road noise dominates, giving the driver all the surface information the steering refuses to. Huge potential for hot version.

### Verdict

Presentable and polished. Still carrying the train but now with a better chance than ever of a little usher action.

## Ford Focus Zetec S

### Small things on toast or posh caterers?

Though Zetec S standard spec is respectable, the infotainment's no great shakes. So, for £250, the addition of a good quality 8-inch touchscreen incorporating navigation and DAB radio is not only a steal, it's essential.



Tired cabin, great driving position

### Pol Roger Reserve or pink prosecco?

80kg heavier than the Astra, and doesn't feel that quick out of the traps. Doesn't matter, though. Glorious powertrain with rorty noises gangs up with crisp, precise gearchange to elicit serious enthusiasm.

### Crawl over her to get to you...

Evidence of the sizeable fortune splurged on the first Focus by Parry-Jones still shines through. Fantastic steering, flat, tingling ride and fabulous poise gives it the ability to effortlessly maintain a higher speed through corners.

### Verdict

Lamb dressed as mutton. But definitely still worth an extended run under the duvet.

Golf oh so at home on expansive gravel driveways



### VAUXHALL ASTRA SRI NAV 1.4i 150PS TURBO

- Price £19,595 ➤ As tested £20,985
- Engine 1399cc 16v 4-cyl turbo, 148bhp @ 5000rpm, 181lb ft @ 2000rpm ➤ Transmission 6-speed manual, front-wheel drive
- Performance 7.8sec 0-60mph, 134mph, 51.4mpg, 128g/km CO2 ➤ Weight 1278kg ➤ On Sale Now
- Rating ★★★★★

### FORD FOCUS ZETEC S 1.5 ECOBOOST S/S

- Price £20,845 ➤ As tested £22,520
- Engine 1499cc 16v 4-cyl turbo, 148bhp @ 6000rpm, 177lb ft @ 1600rpm ➤ Transmission 6-speed manual, front-wheel drive
- Performance 8.9sec 0-62mph, 130mph, 51.4mpg, 127g/km CO2 ➤ Weight 1358kg ➤ On Sale Now
- Rating ★★★★★



## Kia **Proceed GT**

### Small things on toast or posh caterers?

DAB radio added, CD player deleted. TomTom nav via the 7-inch touchscreen and rapid phone connectivity. High standard spec including the only reversing camera here, and also the only proper keyless entry to match keyless go.



An old-school hot hatch, complete with old-school dash plastics

### Pol Roger Reserve or pink prosecco?

Quickest here, but a porker on a par with the Focus, so not by a margin that a 53bhp power advantage might posit. Engine eager to rev and eager to shout about it; enjoys a good thrashing.

### Crawl over her to get to you...

Speculation that this is an even less worthy candidate for a carnival music-backed ad campaign than the mastication marathon that is Ryvita would be misplaced; the Kia delivers healthy dollops of classic hot-hatch fun.

### Verdict

Price undermines the Kia's premise of more go for less dough. More mild than wild child in this company.

## VW **Golf 1.4 TSI**

### Small things on toast or posh caterers?

Satisfactory rather than extravagant standard specification. Simple, intuitive infotainment operation an ongoing hallmark. Yoof will favour the Astra's appetite; grown-ups will be more than happy with all here save the £320 fleecing for 'Advanced telephone prep'.



Intuitive controls, classy cabin, delightful ergonomics etc

### Pol Roger Reserve or pink prosecco?

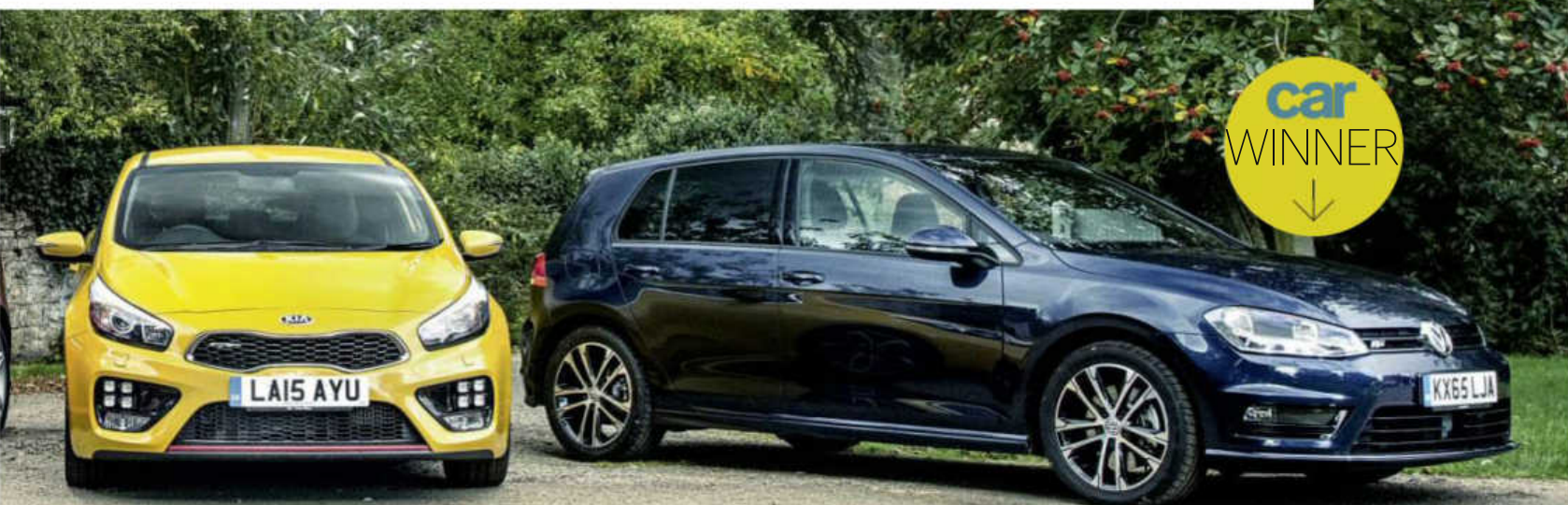
Great engine, lusty in tone and temperament; installed in the lightest car here and abetted by tidy gear change, surprisingly quick too. Undetectable two-cylinder shut off boasts the best fuel economy and emissions here.

### Crawl over her to get to you...

Solid, refined and revoltingly good at getting on with it. All controls a constant pleasure to use, with a newfound deftness and danceability about the handling which renders the £830 adaptive chassis option pointless.

### Verdict

Wonderfully complete car; nearly perfect. Reassuringly expensive. A threat to piggy banks everywhere.



### KIA PROCEED GT 1.6 T-GDI

- Price £23,105 > As tested £23,105
- Engine 1591cc 16v 4-cyl turbo, 201bhp @ 6000rpm, 195lb ft @ 1500rpm
- Transmission 6-speed manual, front-wheel drive
- Performance 7.3sec 0-60mph, 143mph, 38.2mpg, 170g/km CO2 > Weight 1359kg
- On Sale Now > Rating ★★★★★

### VOLKSWAGEN GOLF 1.4 TSI ACT 150PS R-LINE

- Price £25,265 > As tested £28,620
- Engine 1395cc 16v 4-cyl turbo, 148bhp @ 5000rpm, 184lb ft @ 1500rpm
- Transmission 6-speed manual, front-wheel drive
- Performance 8.2sec 0-62mph, 134mph, 57.6mpg, 115g/km CO2 > Weight 1270kg > On Sale Now
- Rating ★★★★★



# Gavin Green

THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE

'VW will no longer splash cash on vanity projects, meaning no Audi F1 team and probably no Le Mans'



## THE FRANKFURT MOTOR

Show, as usual, was full of German car company chiefs looking pleased with themselves, apart from BMW's Harald Krüger who fainted. Expansive and expensive stands promoted the collective industrial might of the world's most successful car producing nation, including the achievements of

the newly crowned number one global car maker, Volkswagen.

Of course the senior people at German car companies are (mostly) very clever and there were some great new concept cars. But sometimes their sense of their own perfection can be trying, so it was something of a relief to have a cup of tea at the end of the first press day with Peugeot's likeable CEO Carlos Tavares. As we spoke about possible trends, he said: 'You know anything can happen in this industry – tomorrow morning you may have a big surprise.'

Four days later the VW emissions scandal broke and many Volkswagen senior managers suddenly became (to paraphrase Churchill) immodest men who have much to be modest about. How the mighty fall! This wasn't so much progress through technology, as *Vorsprung durch Treachery*. There was much *schadenfreude* from rival French, Italian, American and British car bosses, until they saw their share prices fall too.

The VW scandal moves fast. As you read this, there may not even be a VW Group. Here are a few observations and predictions.

1. Many owners will ignore the recall. Their 'fixed' cars will almost certainly use more fuel and/or be less powerful, no matter what reassuring words VW utter. As the recall is not 'safety related', it is not mandatory. So watch those VW recall letters head for the bin... Unless there's compensation on offer, of course.
2. Despite suggestions that owners of Golf diesels are emitting equivalent toxins to Puffing Billy every time they accelerate, the affected vehicles are still cleaner overall than almost any car more than five years old.
3. If legislators are serious about NOx and particulates in cities, they should ban most buses, taxis and trucks.

4. Diesel fumes, even from 'clean' EU6 compliant cars, supposedly cause cancer. Then again so does sunshine, wine, coffee, bacon butties, barbecues, coconut oil, pickled vegetables, shift work and ham sandwiches.

5. The Golf was the best mid-sized hatch on sale in early September and it still is today. So don't cancel that order.

6. On the other hand, if you ordered a Jetta or Touran and still await delivery, this may be a good excuse to get your money back.

7. The VW Group will no longer splash cash on vanity projects, meaning no Audi F1 team and probably no more Le Mans.

8. Fiat boss Sergio Marchionne, annoyed by VW taunts about buying Alfa Romeo, will get his revenge and start a rumour that he wants to buy Audi or Porsche – or maybe the whole VW Group. He may even be serious (he tried to buy GM Europe in 2009).

9. The Greeks will be laughing.

10. Greed and megalomania caused VW's downfall. They were so desperate to be the world's number one car maker, they cheated.

11. The availability of good electric cars can't come soon enough. Anyone who has driven a BMW i3, i8 or Tesla Model S knows this.

12. Diesel sales will continue strongly in Europe, with only a modest dip, at least for another five years.

13. Diesel sales will collapse in America.

14. Environmentalists who urged us to embrace diesels 20 years ago will take no blame. 'It's all the fault of multinationals.'

15. Yet they were right – diesels were the best solution to reducing CO2 in the '90s, and are still the best short-term solution now.

16. Americans who now reject fuel-efficient VW diesels will buy over-sized petrol SUVs instead. So that's real eco progress...

17. Future generations will look back in amazement and wonder how legislators allowed factories and vehicles, burning filthy hydrocarbons (coal, diesel, oil, petrol etc) to poison our air.

18. CAR legend LJK Setright, a Cicero among we scribblers, will be spinning excitedly in his grave. He always detested diesels.

19. Official mpg and CO2 figures are, of course, a joke. The biggest disparity between real CO2 and official figures is with plug-in hybrids, darlings of the self-righteous. Anyone seriously believe a Cayenne hybrid is cleaner than an Aygo?

20. Finally, German car makers will show great humility at the next Frankfurt Show (I am not confident about this).

@greenofrichmond

Former CAR editor Gavin is an undyingly passionate and knowledgeable car bloke whose opinion cuts the mustard at motoring's top table. And they don't always like what they hear





# Allow us to demonstrate...



Current Birds demonstrators; F32 435i, **F30 335d xdrive**, E92 335i, E89 Z4 35is, E87 130i.

Only genuine BMW tuners will invest in their own demonstrators to prove their product's worth to you.

Book a demonstration with Birds and we will show you how our bespoke tuning packages can transform your BMW into one of the most dynamic high-performance road cars in the U.K.

**Call us on 01753 657 444**

[www.birdsauto.com](http://www.birdsauto.com) | [tuning@birdsauto.com](mailto:tuning@birdsauto.com)

**Birds**  
Ultimate BMW Performance

# Mark Walton

THE INCURABLE ENTHUSIAST

'I got excited by the Giulia's promise. With spec like that it's bound to be brilliant. Ah but wait... the 4C'



**IN DEFENCE OF** the Alfa Romeo 4C (which I'd never driven before, until this week): well, it's a car that Apple will never make, that's for sure. We should be glad about that, like David Attenborough discovering a new species of slug – it's only a slug, but that's something to be glad about isn't it? Diversity.

Apple (if it is developing a new car, as the rumours suggest) will no doubt launch a perfect white cube riding on gold discs, with Siri in the passenger seat telling you she's no longer connected to the internet. The 4C is at the opposite end of the car spectrum – mid-engined, bare carbon tub, it looks like a cross between a Ferrari 360 and a Lotus Exige. A car with unassisted steering and rear-wheel drive. Just like Attenborough, skipping round his garden filled with existential joy, we too should skip around the beautiful little 4C, singing our heartfelt thanks that a mainstream manufacturer had the balls to build it, in a world of platform-sharing and self-driving electric-powered appliances.

But just keep skipping okay – around and around and around – and whatever you do, don't succumb to the temptation to get in and drive. Because yes, I'm afraid the Alfa 4C's reputation is completely justified – stunning to look at, a specification to die for, but such a disappointment on the road it leaves you with the kind of ache you feel when your girlfriend breaks up with you and starts posting all the love poems you wrote for her on social media, #cringe.

(I'm just imagining that would be awful, it hasn't actually happened to me.)

But if it's so painful to be reminded of how far from greatness (or how close to it) the 4C is, why drive it now, two years after it was launched? Because – duh! – if you read the last issue (CAR, November) you'll know I had 'an audience' with the new Alfa Giulia in Italy, and got extremely excited by its seductive promise. A lightweight sports saloon? With a twin-turbo V6? Rear-wheel-drive?

Carbon seats? With spec like that, surely it's bound to be brilliant, right? I mean, it *has* to be, right?

Ah but wait... the 4C. As I discovered after about three miles, the Alfa 4C proves you can't guarantee greatness with a spec sheet. It's not the ingredients in the recipe that matter, it's the way they're baked together, and the 4C lacks something, something ghostly and ethereal, something that's hard to classify or diagnose. Yes, the unassisted steering jigs around in your hand, pulling you off course as it follows cambers and contours; and it lacks transparency and feel at the wheel. But these characteristics could have been endearing – all those reviews might have

said, 'the car feels alive'; and that steering could have been described as 'light and pure'. Instead, every reviewer said the same thing: the 4C lacks feel – a hard-to-pin-down gut sensation that tells you you're on top of it, that everything's beneath you. That wayward straight-line handling and the absence of detail in the feedback means you never settle into the drive, you remain cautious and wary. It's like picking up a tray of wine glasses, all filled to the brim, and sensing straight away that the tray's not balanced, and if you're not careful you're going to drop them all and spill gallons of red wine all over your best friend's cream carpet, and his wife's going to go absolutely bananas and the dinner party's going to end early in shouting and bitter acrimony.

Driving the 4C is just like that.

So we can't take the new Giulia for granted, not until we've actually driven it. But there is one thing that gives us hope – the guy who ran the project was Phillipe Krieff, who's last job was the Ferrari 458 Speciale. If there's one car on Earth that illustrates what's wrong with the Alfa 4C, it's the 458. Forget the power output, the romance of the badge and the price, the Ferrari (and its 488 successor) has a truly magical feel, like you've been partially absorbed into the driving seat, like you could drive it accurately with a mere flex of your buttocks.

Can Alfa create that kind of magic in the Giulia? If it can, the 4C will remain a strange anomaly – a rare species to admire, but not necessarily keep as a pet.

@markwalton\_

**Mark's highly original slant on car stuff has been lighting up these pages for several decades, during which time Alfa has made hardly any great cars. But hope springs eternal...**





# TOUGH STUFF

CERAMIC COMPOSITE TECHNOLOGY

LEADING THE WAY IN  
**AUTOMOTIVE**  
**DETAILING**  
**TECHNOLOGY**

**GTECHNIQ**  
SMART SURFACE SCIENCE



Like no other product, **Crystal Serum** provides paint protection with previously unachievable levels of gloss, durability, scratch and chemical resistance.

Its composite structure offers the ultimate in **ceramic protection** plus the same slick finish and candy like gloss as the very best carnauba waxes.



**PROFESSIONAL**



[service.gtechniq.com](http://service.gtechniq.com)

# CHRISTMAS MISSION ACCOMPLISHED



“Good service.  
Delivery on time.  
Great discounted price.”

**feefo**  
The Global Feedback Engine

## ORDER A MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION FOR YOUR LOVED ONES NOW.

- The perfect Christmas gift that lasts all year
- Best price guaranteed
- E-card with every order
- Print and digital packages available
- Instant digital access across multiple digital devices



FOR QUICK AND EASY ONLINE ORDERING  
VISIT **WWW.GREATMAGAZINES.CO.UK/XMASMISSION**  
OR CALL **01858 438884** & QUOTE **ELF1**

\*Save on average 40% – this relates to the average saving across all print subscriptions from the 12th October to 30th December 2015. Offer available until 30th December 2015 and to the UK only. Cost from landlines for 01 numbers per minute are (approximately) 2p to 10p. Cost from mobiles are 10p to 40p per minute (approximately). Costs vary depending on the geographical location in the UK. You may get free calls to some numbers as part of your call package – please check with your phone provider. Order lines are open 8:30am – 9pm Mon – Fri; 10am – 4pm Sat. Your subscription will start with the next available issue, unless you specify otherwise. For full terms and conditions, please visit [greatmagazines.co.uk/terms](http://greatmagazines.co.uk/terms).



# car INTERACTIVE.

SPONSORED BY

**BOTB**  
WIN YOUR DREAM CAR



Sports Car Giant Test contenders from our November issue. In every sense, you'll need to be quick

## Sorry, the Ferrari's all we've got left

► VIA EMAIL

I know we're in rarefied atmosphere with this year's Sports Car Giant Test (CAR, November), but part of the fun of reading these tests is the prospect, vague or real, of being able to buy the best rated cars. It's therefore a shame that four out of your top five are, to all intents and purposes, sold out. I'm a multiple 911 buyer and I didn't stand even the remotest chance of getting an RS or GT4, which to be honest does test one's brand loyalty. Maybe the Ferrari 488 deserves extra points – and a victory under the laws of poetic justice – by virtue of the fact you can actually walk into a showroom and buy one. How quaint! Great feature all the same, though.

**Steve Newell**

## Miracle Alfa

► VIA EMAIL

Your article on the design of the new Alfa Romeo Giulia (CAR, November) stated that a team of ten people, starting with a blank piece of paper, created a completed production-ready car in two and half years. This beggars belief. My own car is a Mercedes E-class, model W211. This was a substantial redefinition of an older model, yet it reportedly cost £2bn and took four years to develop.

**Kenneth Jones**

## Alfa vs the Germans

► VIA EMAIL

Great to see that you are as excited as I am by the prospect of the new Giulia Quadrifoglio, but based on your slating of the current Giulietta in the same issue, I expect the usual pattern of press coverage for any Alfa. First, there's the excitement (herald Alfa's saviour etc), then the first drives and euphoric 'Alfa beats its rivals' headlines. Then, a couple of years down the line, car mags revert to the standard German bias.

How to have your say:



**VIA EMAIL**

CAR@bauermedia.co.uk



**VIA TWITTER**

@CARmagazine



**VIA FACEBOOK**

facebook.com/CARmagazine



**VIA POST**

CAR magazine,  
Media House,  
Lynchwood,  
Peterborough  
Business Park,  
Peterborough  
PE2 6EA

It happened with the 164, 156, the Giulietta, the 4C and probably more. Thing is, my Giulietta Multiair 170 (my second, and my seventh Alfa) has character, style and is fun to drive. None of these attributes is possessed by a Golf (my wife has one) or an A3. It is most definitely not a Fiat (Audis, Porsches and Bentleys are rarely accused on being related to VW Caddy vans in the way you link Alfas to Doblos) but until you accept that the dull German way is not the only way then these Teutonic turds will continue to dominate. Shame!

**Peter Vaughan**

## On Toyota's Mirai

► VIA CAR ONLINE

Is it the hydrogen that makes it so ugly?  
**Nick**

► VIA CAR ONLINE

Can't help but feel Toyota's invested in the wrong tech. It's extremely unclear whether hydrogen has a future in cars – currently, the technology is prohibitively expensive at multiple points of the process, and not

even particularly green as so much energy is wasted by processing hydrogen. Meanwhile, Toyota's lost its lead in electric power at a time when EVs are becoming practical choices for large numbers of people.

**Vertigo**

## Call time on 0-62mph

► VIA EMAIL

Another month, another car dipping below the 3.0sec 0-62 mph barrier. Should I believe that a stock GT-R or a 650S would be a match for a P1 based on their similar 0-62 times? With launch-control software, four-wheel-drive systems and trick tall gearing (step up new Audi TT, which

**Toyota's hydrogen fuel-cell Mirai – like all pioneers it has quite a few detractors**





reaches 62mph in second gear), even blown four-cylinder executive saloons reach 62mph in less than 6.5 seconds. Which begs the question: is 0-62 data a thing of the past? Shouldn't we bury 0-62 just like 0-30mph of old? A value of 0-100mph or more would be much more indicative of the true performance potential of a car. And that new value should require somehow that all cars measured be in at least fourth gear. I believe CAR should be the frontier of ditching old data and set yet another new benchmark!

**Kaiser Victoras**

## VW: we did well!

> VIA EMAIL

Nice job on summing up the VW Diesel-gate scandal (CAR, November). So many (largely ill-informed) column inches were devoted to this story and I look to CAR to give me an intelligent, distilled digest without labouring the point or shrouding my monthly diet of great cars in a fug of dieselly political smoke. Well judged.

**Tim Greer**

## VW: no we didn't!

> VIA EMAIL

I was expecting more from November's edition. I had read, seen and heard so much on the VW emissions scandal but I knew I'd get the real story from CAR. I wanted Kacher, Green, Oliver, McNamara, Walton, Pollard and the other CAR journalistic giants to reveal how it happened, whether mpg is also being cheated, whether other manufacturers are involved, what the deep structural consequences are going to be for the whole industry. I wanted you to spill all the beans and pull no punches. I wanted your editorial meeting to have ripped

**Porsche and Audi take on Tesla in our November issue. Can they be green if power stations aren't?**

up the proposed edition and scrambled together a special report on a gigantic scandal. But in the end we got two pages. I hope there's more to come!

**Nat Low**

## On Formula E

> VIA FACEBOOK

I think that the best way to improve the spectacle (because it is deadly dull) is to relax the formula and encourage 'out of the box' thinking. So, unlimited budgets, the car has to fit within a box of fixed dimensions and carbon fuels are not permitted. That's it, that's the formula. The benefits to road car technology would be immeasurable.

**Graham Lewis**

## Lay off the MG, Gavin

> VIA EMAIL

I expected better from Gavin Green in his column on the demise of the British built roadster (CAR, November) – it was

**The VW scandal as reported in our November issue. We were wrong, yet also, strangely, right**



# Why electric cars are bad for the planet

## LETTER OF THE MONTH

About 15 years ago CAR ran a piece on Mercedes' & BMW's reluctance to make hybrid cars.

They weren't convinced by the green credentials and extra cost. Now hybrids and EVs are everywhere. But how green are they? The lithium-ion batteries in a Tesla aren't considered green by Panasonic, who supply the components. They've stated that Elon Musk's claims are hyperbole. A car that contains the equivalent of 1000 laptop batteries can't be green – the energy that powers them mostly comes from coal-fired power stations. A Tesla S has to be much worse for the environment in manufacture than conventional cars. Calls are being made to help drivers abandon diesel and switch to EVs. I'm no diesel fan – our obsession with reducing CO<sub>2</sub> led us away from the fact that diesel particulates were known carcinogens. But the fact is, until batteries can be produced cleanly and power stations are fuelled differently, electric cars are bad for the environment.

**Charlie Blackler**

Letter of the month wins a free entry into the next supercar prize draw held by BOTB.com, worth £25!





full of inaccurate, generalised clichés that have been wheeled out many times before. Poor quality leaking roofs and leaking sumps from MG, Triumph and Lotus sold in their thousands. Unquestionably the MX-5 in its original form is a masterpiece of automotive design, but please don't dismiss the MGF – it was the UK's best-selling convertible for most of its life. Over complicated? No! Ingenious? Yes! Who would have thought two Metro subframes could be used for a mid-engined roadster. It was developed and brought to market for a fraction of the cost of the MX-5, and the handling and ride were a match for the Mazda on a twisty B-road. So please don't revert to the lazy old MG/Rover/BL-bashing – Mr Green should know better.

**Charlie Deards**

## On the Honda NSX

► VIA CAR ONLINE

How heavy? That's a game killer. The McLaren 570S is markedly lighter, as is the



↑  
**Honda's new NSX faces one or two challenges. Turn to p76 to find out what it's like to drive**

Porsche 911 Turbo (no, the REAL turbo). In terms of looks, it's a little dated already – like one of the Lotus designs penned by Donato Coco, especially the front. That said, it's not unattractive and would, I am sure, look more striking in a deeper metallic hue. I like the interior – identifiably Honda, and done well. It needs some colour though – this is a supercar, for heaven's sake!

**Ray A**

► VIA CAR ONLINE

Despite the enthusiasm of the motoring press and technical excellence I don't recall the old NSX selling that well. I have always assumed that this was due to performance which on paper was not particularly outstanding and its slightly restrained looks – a common Honda problem. I hope that this version does not similarly miss the mark. A pity, like the old one it probably deserves to succeed but unfortunately in this market rational purchasing decisions don't necessarily rule.

**JLConsult**

## Brera's lovely tail lamps

► VIA THE POST!

In his Top 10 (CAR, November) Chris Chilton may have forgotten the Alfa Romeo Brera in his list of coolest tail lamps. Fine Giugiaro styling!

**Humphrey Britton-Johnson**

## The ugly truth

► VIA EMAIL

Whatever happened to car design? I looked at the five classic Alfas which inspired the design of the Giulia (CAR, November) and saw they were all curvy and beautiful. The Giulia is neither. And Toyota/Lexus seems to have abandoned curves and beauty in their entirety, in favour of wilful ugliness (stand up RX450h, come on down Mirai). What's to blame – modern art or modern safety regs?

**Geoff Barding**

# car

Subscription hotline

**01858 438884** or visit

[greatmagazines.co.uk/car](http://greatmagazines.co.uk/car)

**CAR Magazine, Media House, Lynchwood, Peterborough PE2 6EA**

Tel: **01733 468000**

Email: **CAR@bauermedia.co.uk**

or visit us at: **www.carmagazine.co.uk**

Subscribe: **01858 438884**

Display advertising: **020 7295 6713**

Classified advertising: **01733 468864**

## EDITORIAL

Editor

**Phil McNamara**

Managing editor

**Greg Fountain**

Features editor

**Ben Miller**

Digital editor-in-chief

**Tim Pollard**

Associate editor

**CJ Hubbard**

Staff writer

**James Taylor**

Art editor

**Matthew Tarrant**

Designer

**Rebecca Wilshire**

Editors-at-large

**Chris Chilton, Mark Walton,**

**Ben Barry**

Contributor-in-chief

**Gavin Green**

European editor

**Georg Kacher**

Contributing editors

**Ben Oliver, Ben Whitworth,**

**Anthony French-Constant,**

**Steve Moody**

F1 correspondent

**Tom Clarkson**

Office manager

**Leise Enright**

Production controller

**Hollie Swift**

## ADVERTISING

Brand director

**Sarah Hughes**

Account manager

**Tom Meadowcroft**

Senior sales executive

**Curtis Reed**

Motor-related/aftermarket

**Claire Meade-Gore**

Regional sales

**Graham Roby**

US advertising

**Kate Buckley +845 266 4980**

## PUBLISHING

Digital commercial director

**Jim Burton**

Marketing manager

**Rachael Beesley**

Direct marketing manager

**Julie Spires**

Direct marketing executive

**Rebecca Lambert**

Editorial director

**June Smith-Sheppard**

Managing director

**Niall Clarkson**

Group MD

**Rob Munro-Hall**



## CAR ONLINE

5 most read stories on [carmagazine.co.uk](http://carmagazine.co.uk)

- 1) **Porsche 911R scoop: upcoming back-to-basics 911 has the purists chomping at the bit**
- 2) **Riding shotgun in the new Focus RS: you loved our first ride in the friskiest fast Focus yet**
- 3) **Our first drive of the 2016 Honda NSX sparked plenty of debate. Not everyone's a fan...**
- 4) **First official pictures of the new BMW M2 sent the page counters into meltdown**
- 5) **Tokyo motor show 2015 review: greatest hits from the maddest of motor shows**

## THE CAR POLL

Lewis Hamilton and Jackie Stewart both won three F1 titles. Whose was the greater achievement?

**LEWIS HAMILTON - 34%**

**JACKIE STEWART - 66%**





**SHARE YOUR PICTURES - WIN THIS £500 WATCH!**  
Send a picture and 50 words to CAR@bauermedia.co.uk, labelled 'Your Month'. The best entry this month wins an Elliot Brown Canford worth £500. We'll also publish a selection of your entries...

# Your month

The place where you let us peek into your weird and wonderful automotive lives

1

## SAND CAR-STLE

My son and I loved your '25 cars to drive before you die' feature, but can't quite stretch to some of the cars. So, we made a Lotus on Woolacombe beach instead.

**RICHARD WHITE**

2

## FOOTBALLER'S CAR?

On a recent trip to Rutland Water my son Josh enjoyed this close encounter with a Ferrari 458.

**STEVE GORE**

3

## WHAT BRIEFING?

I grabbed a pic of Strakka Racing's Danny Watts catching up on road car news instead of the team briefing going on behind at the FIA WEC 6 Hours of Fuji in Japan. It must have helped as he was regularly the fastest car on track!

**NICK BAILEY**

4

## RAINBOW'S END

A pot of 'Liquid Gold'? That's the official colour of my Renault Megane RenaultSport 230 F1 Team R26. Possibly the longest car name in history, and certainly one of the quickest ways to get from one end of the B488 to the other.

**TARK MILLICAN**

5

## LAMBOAT AHOY!

I spotted this Lamborghini Aventador LP720-4 50th Anniversario at Puerto Banus in Southern Spain, presumably parked next to its owner's speed boat.

**JOHN BECKINGHAM**

6

## MUSTANG CALI

A brilliant holiday touring round California in a convertible Mustang produced plenty of great shots, but none quite as nice as this one. The 2.3 Ecoboost sounded like Darth Vader making his tea, but was fun nonetheless.

**ROBLAMBERT**

7

## NEED FOR SWEDE

I realised my love of Volvos and convertibles by investing a small part of my redundancy in a C70. I took advantage of the late October sunshine to drive top down to Wasdale Head. Pet hate: people driving roof up in the sunshine!

**JONATHAN ELVY**

8

## YEAR OF THE BENTAYGA

Visiting Chengdu, for the launch of Bentley Bentayga in China with head of exterior design, Sang Yup Lee. Check out the Pink R8 in the background! I prefer to read CAR whilst travelling across the city in a Bentley Mulsanne!

**DARREN DAY, HEAD OF INTERIOR DESIGN, BENTLEY**

9

## WHISKY IN THE CAR

We went to Islay/Jura/Kintyre - over 2300 miles in four weeks. Three Greats: great driving Discovery, great magazine, and great wee dram whilst reading CAR!

**BRIAN HUBBARD**





ELLIOT  BROWN

BUILT TO GO THE DISTANCE



Numbered limited edition celebrating the 10th Clipper Race.

Shock-protected Swiss movement, individually pressure tested in water at 200m, triple sealed crowns, premium leather deployant strapping.

Available to pre order at [www.elliottbrownwatches.com](http://www.elliottbrownwatches.com)

Model shown: Canford 202-015. £395

Boxed set includes: fitted black leather deployant strap, additional bespoke black canvas strap, 2 screwdrivers and commemorative insert.



---

# 15 BIG SHOCKS

COMING WITH

# 2016's **MOST WANTED CARS**

---







1

## THE FOCUS THAT BEGGARS BELIEF

0-62MPH IN  
4.7SEC, 4WD  
– FOR £28k!

Words CJ Hubbard  
Photography Wilson Hennessy

**WHAT'S \$20,000 TO** you? To the Nitrous blue bundle of fury on these pages that's the cost of tooling the brackets for a slightly thicker rear anti-roll bar, because nothing in the existing Ford parts bin was suitable.

But more significantly, it's the difference between 'a bar that's going to change the whole character of the car' and a compromise. So says vehicle engineering manager Tyrone Johnson, explaining that it wasn't a compromise he was prepared to make. 'You don't ask for \$20,000 in mainstream engineering,' he says with a laugh, 'because that is a big deal.' But for the new Focus RS? Nothing was impossible.

Almost everything about this third-generation Focus RS is extraordinary. Which is not the same as without limits. As the man in charge is quick to point out, there had to be a business case for everything he and his team chose to do; spending that \$20k there meant \$20k less to spend elsewhere. But seriously – name another car that has a four-wheel-drive system with a dedicated Drift Mode? Ford has built one into a five-door family hatch, given it 345bhp, stuck with a manual gearbox and then priced it at £28,940. If we're currently in the midst of a mega-hatch war, this thing looks like a serious escalation.

Can it possibly be as good as the company claims? We've spoken to both Johnson and Focus RS chief programme engineer Jürgen Gagstatter, and cadged a passenger ride at Ford's

Lommel Proving Ground in Belgium to try to find out. This is the story of *the* hot hatch of 2016.

It's been more than three years in the making, and has enjoyed support from right at the top since the start. 'Raj Nair really wanted this car,' Johnson says; Nair is Ford's vice president and chief technical officer. 'He *really* wanted this car. We probably wouldn't be sitting here without him.' This kind of cheerleading brings opportunities, but also challenges. There was no way Nair was going to let Johnson engineer the RS only for Europe, which would have been easier, and cheaper, than taking it into America as well. Instead, they had to figure out a way to make it work with both US and European safety regulations, and then come down a single production line in Saarlouis, Germany, amongst every other European Focus. 'This was very, very difficult,' he says. 'Almost moving worlds.'

To understand the scale of the challenge, you have to understand just how different the RS is to its ordinary brethren – and that process starts with the four-wheel-drive powertrain. 345bhp didn't emerge out of the fog of war, so to speak, as a frantic response to what Audi, Mercedes and Honda were up to; it's been the figure from the beginning. But uprating the 2.3-litre Ecoboost four from the 306bhp it produces in the Mustang involved changing the turbo, the cylinder liners, the intake system, the exhaust and the cylinder head – the latter assisted by none other than Cosworth. The intercooler is physically the biggest unit that will fit in a Focus, while the aggressive front bumper not only contributes to the 'zero lift' aerodynamics target, it features the largest possible cooling aperture and a







RS engineering boss Tyrone Johnson: 'This was almost like moving worlds'

**'It took a lot of late-night meetings to convince the seniors all-wheel drive was the future'**

grille with greater gaps in its mesh. Yet come the car's debut at the Geneva motor show in March, when the output was due to be announced, team RS was experiencing a technical hiccup that threw the planned figure into doubt, and they had to settle for a promise of 'more than' 317bhp instead.

Hiccup subsequently overcome, the full 345 ponies peak at 6000rpm, encouraged along by 324lb ft at 2000-4500rpm that overboosts to 347lb ft for up to 18 seconds if you really nail it, and a valve in the exhaust combined with 'an injection strategy' that means it pops and bangs like a rally car in its racier settings. The next problem was how to control it, beyond the obvious recourse to 350mm Brembo brakes. Having already fed this level of power through the front wheels of the special edition Mk2 Focus RS500, Johnson recalls it took 'a lot of late-night meetings to convince the seniors that all-wheel drive was the future.' Being responsible for the Mk2's RevoKnuckle front suspension design probably helped his case. He knew that innovation's limitations, and he knew that to make the Mk3 'handle the way we want it to handle' it had to have all-wheel drive, regardless of packaging, production and cost issues.

Complexities include replacing the boot floor because the standard car's spare wheel well was in the way, fitting an entirely new 'saddle' type fuel tank, and swapping the rear sub-frame for an item that one of Johnson's engineers originally ▶







The choice of 350mm Brembos was the easy bit. Everything else they agonised over



**The RS is intended to feel 'like a rear-wheel-drive car with an enormous amount of grip'**

You'll know it's special by the blue stitching and huggy Recaros. The family, however, will think you've been uncharacteristically sensible



designed for Volvo 10 years ago (the Focus still being based on the 'C1' platform developed while Ford, Volvo and Mazda were bedfellows). Finding this 'breathed' too much when subject to RS-level forces, additional strengthening was added, which then effectively defeated the rear crash structures, leading to further head scratching. With more reinforcement within the bodysheet and on the front subframe, the RS is 23% stiffer than a regular Focus overall, but 200% stiffer in key areas. Other bespoke RS elements include lower balljoints and knuckles at the front, increasing camber to -1.5 degrees for extra grip, while the front power transfer unit and some of the bushes actually come from the Kuga. All of this has to be managed on a factory line already bursting to capacity. You get the idea.

And even once all-wheel drive was agreed, it's not as if Johnson and his team went for the easy option. 'We built a Haldex prototype,' he explains, 'and then said "we're not doing that".' He's not a fan of the system used by basically every rival – at his most succinct he describes it in four-letter form – largely because the advantages over front-wheel drive are rooted in straight-line traction alone. 'For understeer, those all-wheel-drive systems do nothing,' he claims. Ford's system is intended to be rather more active, or as Gagstatter puts it: 'Like a rear-wheel-drive car with an enormous amount of grip'. The distinction is instantly apparent from the passenger seat.

Can you genuinely tell how immediate the front end feels from the wrong side of the car, how resistant it is to washing wide through Lommel's 'Track Seven' hairpins – the scene of so many offs? Not definitively. But what is unquestionable is just how straightforward it is for the technician driving to bring the back axle into play. Not in terms of lurid tailslides (that comes later, on a skid pan), but in the way he's able to adjust the car's corner-exit trajectory under power. Nosing down the road like a laser or neatly sidestepping the rear tyres for a flourish, the RS feels unerringly transparent in its intentions and almost shockingly keen to do the driver's bidding. Yet he's so relaxed behind the wheel and so clearly not trying overly hard – with this brief demonstration of its prowess, carefully controlled though it is, you can't help thinking this Focus is going to make the Golf R and Audi RS3 seem as agile as an oven glove. Exactly how has Ford achieved this using essentially the same

all-wheel-drive system as the Range Rover Evoque?

Let's bust that myth. Pointing at the Rear Drive Unit (RDU) on the underside of an RS that's been conveniently hoisted up in one of Lommel's garages, Johnson explains. 'Land Rover takes a unit like this from the same supplier, GKN. But our unit is different now. We actually used some of the Land Rover components early on in the programme, but we broke them all.' Deadpan, but you can tell he's grinning inside. 'So we've changed it completely. The housing is different, the internals are different, the gears are different – basically everything's different now. And we've made it more compact to fit our space.'

He's not kidding about compact. Sitting at the junction between the three-piece propshaft and the two rear drive shafts is a silver box that looks barely bigger than a loaf of bread – certainly much smaller than a conventional differential. It houses a pair of electronically controlled clutches, one for either side of the car, constantly varying the amount of drive going to each rear wheel and enabling the RS to achieve true torque vectoring. A Haldex system can only control the distribution front and rear; in the Focus up to 100% of available rear torque – and that's nominally 70% of the total at most, though Ford has seen up to 95% real world delivery in testing – can be sent to a single rear wheel. It's not hard to see the dynamic potential, while outright traction and launch control means 0-62mph in 4.7sec.

'The brains of it all is the software,' Johnson stresses, before acknowledging the initial size of the gulf between the potential and the actual. 'When we first started out on this we thought: once we get the RDU, everything else will be a piece of cake. Well, once we got it, that's when the work started. Because it ▶



The other part of the challenge is that it can't be too hardcore – it's also got to take four people down the shops

**Price**  
£28,940  
**Engine** 2261cc turbo 4-cyl,  
345bhp @ 6000rpm, 324lb ft @  
2000-4500rpm (347 on overboost)  
**Transmission** 6-spd manual, awd  
**Suspension** MacPherson strut with semi-  
isolated subframe front; SLA independent  
with control blade rear  
**Performance** 4.7sec 0-62mph, 165mph,  
36.7mpg, 175g/km CO2  
**Length/width/height**  
4390/1823/1472mm  
**Weight/made from** 1599kg/steel  
**On Sale** Now, first deliveries  
spring 2016





didn't exactly work the way we wanted it to work. Or the way that we expected it was going to work.' This led to an epic amount of calibration effort, managing input from 'literally dozens of sensors' and complicated by the decision to offer four distinct – really distinct – driving modes: Normal, Sport, Track and Drift. Tuning each of these required a huge amount of graft. 'And then figuring out the right combination...' Johnson practically shudders. 'I mean endless, endless discussion on the right combination of the various factors that we had to try to decide about settings. We think we got it right.'

If this is all sounding a little too PlayStation for you, Gagstatter may offer some reassurance. Not only does he confirm the software work was done by the same team responsible for the near-omniscient 'torque vectoring by brake' that allows the Fiesta ST to dance a jig around its front axle – we can't think of better provenance, and the Focus RS has this as well – he explains that Ford retains a thoroughly hardware-driven approach. 'You start with the basic hardware tuning. Forget about electronics, electronic systems, because our philosophy is you do not want electronics to mask hardware and set-up weaknesses.'

It also couldn't be all hardcore, all the time, since, as Johnson puts it, 'this generally is not going to be someone's toy car. This is going to be their car that they take to the grocery store with the kids in the back.' Hence additional complications/features such as the 'dual-mode' Teneco dampers, which can be switched from Normal to Sport and vice versa in any of the



Eat your heart out, BMW?

#### SUSPENSION

Dual-mode dampers are 40% stiffer in Sport setting, intended for circuit use only. 'Don't complain to me if it's too much on the road!' says Johnson. Front springs are 33% stiffer, rears 38%. The rear subframe was originally designed for Volvo. Ford had to check it wouldn't contravene rear crash regs

#### STEERING

2.5 turns lock-to-lock, linear ratio, electrically assisted with Normal and Sport weightings. Johnson: 'We spent a lot of time on steering tuning'

#### WHEELS

19-inch alloys with Michelin Pilot Super Sport tyres as standard; forged option saves 950g per wheel and is available with Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 2 tyres

#### ENGINE

Johnson: 'We went to the Mustang guys originally and said we've got an idea to make your engine more powerful. They weren't interested. Now they are'

#### BRAKES

Ducts and 'jet tunnels' direct cooling air to the 350mm front Brembos, 'the biggest ever fitted to an RS'. Calipers have four 38mm pistons. Optimising brake cooling saw 20% improvement: 'We stopped the car from 137mph 13 times in a row before seeing any fade'

#### FRONT BUMPER

Biggest possible aperture aids cooling, while spoiler targets 'zero lift' aerodynamic goal. 'This is not easy to do on a road car,' says Johnson






drive modes via a button located on the end of the indicator stalk. Again, differentiating the Focus from rivals, this is not a constantly variable system, but two individual damper curves, achieved via separate pathways within each damper unit and activated by a simple solenoid valve. Johnson says he wouldn't use Sport on the road – nor the Nürburgring – that's how much firmer it is. A section of Belgian pavé at Lommel confirms the contrast. Brutal. But on a smooth racing circuit the extra body control should ensure faster lap times.

Amongst all of this multi-faceted capability, does it not still seem incongruous that a company like Ford is offering a Drift Mode – no matter how much recruiting the marketing power of Ken Block helps it appear down with the scene kids? Johnson initially seems to agree: 'It can get you into a lot of trouble,' he says, and he doesn't just mean legally. This, however, is more a concern about people presuming an artless button press will turn them into a hero when its unmitigated abuse is quite capable of seeing the foolhardy exit stage left, in all likelihood pursued by a (smokey) bear. So why offer it at all?

'Number one,' says Gagstatter, 'obviously it demonstrates

what you can do with this kind of all-wheel-drive system, that you cannot do with other types of all-wheel drive system. Number two, this is a car which is also aimed to appeal to the driver enthusiast.' Unsurprisingly, it works by manipulating the torque distribution at the rear axle to encourage the back end to step out, and both he and Johnson are at pains to underline that, as with every other driving mode, the intention is a consistency and transparency in response that leads to a controlled, intuitive experience. 'Even if you are not a professional driver you will quickly be relatively fast,' Gagstatter insists. He also confirms that by default Drift Mode keeps the electronic stability control switched on – 'It's in Sport mode, but it is still active. So the system still helps you if you overdo it.' Turn the ESC all the way off, though – which the RS will allow – and 'you are on your own.'

On the skid pan, the car emphasises this by vaporising its rear tyres and performing donuts so tight it's practically rotating within its own length. Our driver humbly describes himself as the 'average Joe' on the development team.

What a prospect: a five-door family car that's aiming to allow anyone with halfway competent car control to out-drift a new BMW M2 while retaining enough duality to fulfil the purpose inherent in its fundamental description. It's like a Mk1 Escort and an Escort RS Cosworth had a little bit more than a drunken fumble at the Christmas party, and we're all eagerly awaiting a result that's either going to be hugely embarrassing or one of the best decisions Ford has ever made. We'll know once we've driven it in January. 

@ir\_427

## A family car that allows anyone with halfway competent car control to out-drift a BMW M2

### TRANSMISSION

A twin-clutch auto would shave three-tenths from the 0-62mph time, Johnson reckons. But it would also cost more, weigh more (28kg), and be less fun

### PERFORMANCE

Johnson claims none of the performance targets have changed since 2012 – and the RS achieved all of them. Eventually. 'It's not about the times, it's about the experience of driving this car.' Still: 0-62mph in 4.7sec and 165mph flat out – in a Focus?

### EXHAUST

It is basically straight-through to the rear silencer – 'It passes drive-by noise regulations. Just.' An 'injection strategy' adds extra snap, crackle and pop





#### THE CHASSIS

Both cars are based on modular lightweight platforms that will serve everything from C-class to Maybach, from 2-series to X7. 48v electrics means greater efficiency and more gadgets: semi-active suspension and virtual dampers coming in the future!

#### THE POWERTRAINS

E-class and 5-series will go plug-in hybrid, both using 2.0-litre 4-cyl engines with 82bhp e-motors. Merc is ditching V6 engines for inline sixes, and both cars will get downsized four-pot diesels in a bid to crack 99g/km CO2.

#### THE TECHNOLOGIES

Both cars will feature spookily similar, hugely complex driver assistance systems, with remote-control parking, car-to-car comms, gesture control and sat-nav controlled predictive driving. They disagree on lights though: BM favours lasers, Merc LEDs.

#### THE LINE-UPS

Four-door saloons will remain the best-sellers, but Europe will gobble up the 5-series Touring and a much better-packaged 5GT. China's fondness for limos will mean lwb versions will be key, with BMW basing its new e-power model on the lwb 5-series. New E-class coupe and cabrio will become proper four-seaters.



2

3

## NEW 5-SERIES, NEW E-CLASS CARBONFIBRE & HYBRID TECH REVIVE GERMAN ECO CRED

**BUSINESS CLASS** gets upgraded to first in 2016 as BMW and Mercedes load their Mk7 5-series/E-class rivals with the sort of kit and tech you used to expect only on a limo. That means not just more luxury, but cutting edge powertrains, futuristic driver aids, ultra-light materials and platforms so smart they make Stephen Hawking look like Joey Essex.

Merc's modular rear-wheel-drive architecture (MRA) and BMW's cluster platform (CLAR) are both flexible and scalable, so you'll find them underpinning everything from C-class to Maybach (not the crossovers though) and from 2-series to 7, with X-models included. Both use aluminium, and BMW also incorporates carbonfibre reinforcement elements, to elicit weight savings of between 70 and 150kg. Better packaging frees up more space too.

A big, fuel-saving breakthrough comes from 48-volt electrical systems. Not only do they feed ancillaries such as oil and water pumps (goodbye to belt-drive!), but the system is also much better at recuperating brake energy and storing it in a lithium-ion battery. 48v also provides the power for new gadgets, such as electrically operated turbos delivering instant boost. Other future tech it could facilitate includes semi-active suspension with dynamic anti-roll/dive/squat, and electric actuators in lieu of springs and shocks. Radar surface scanners will replace camera-based sensors (which don't work at night).

Plug-in hybrids will be more prevalent in each line-up. Uncannily, both brands will offer 2.0-litre engines mated to 82bhp e-motors; Merc will also offer a six with 109bhp e-assistance in the US, and a plug-in diesel for Europe. And Mercedes is junking its V6s in favour of

new, cheaper-to-build in-line sixes too. Out first is the 2.9-litre diesel with 313bhp in twin-turbo guise and over 400bhp when motivated by four chargers, two of them battery-driven. At the bottom end of the range, there's a new 122bhp 1.6-litre four which, like BMW's 520d, is aiming for 99g/km of CO2.

Driver tech systems will personify both cars. Made by the same hardware supplier they're unsurprisingly similar, featuring remote-control manoeuvring, predictive driving governed by sat-nav, different levels of touchscreen interaction and gesture control, lane-changing and overtaking assist, and an autobahn-assistant which can be left alone at up to 80mph.

Still room for the driver in all this? We hope so.



AUTO BILD/LARSON, ANDREI AVARVARI





## 4 BMW M2

BABY M WILL BE BMW'S BEST DRIVER'S CAR

**TAKING INFLUENCE** from the legendary E30 M3, BMW is going back to basics with the new M2 – or at least, as back to basics as it can in 2016. Successor to the madly sideways 1M Coupe, the M2's emphasis is firmly on an awesome rwd experience, and the methodology is a cut-down version of the M4. Motivation comes courtesy of a 365bhp 3.0-litre twin-turbo straight-six that employs M4-grade componentry, but it's the incorporation of big brother's chassis tech that's really going to make this car shine. Forged aluminium suspension components, active dampers and – yes – the fully variable M-diff are all here. M-DCT 'box shaves two-tenths off the manual's 0-62mph, making it 4.3sec. Yours in April from £44,070.

## 5 JAGUAR F-TYPE SVR

JAGUAR UNLEASHES ITS 911 TURBO S

**HAVING PROVEN** it can make the Range Rover Sport fly, JLR's Special Vehicle Operations has now stopped mucking about with Bond baddies and cancelled hypercars long enough to tune-up the F-type. Next year's F-type SVR is expected to appear at the Geneva motor show in March, and in so doing claim the title of fastest series production Jaguar ever (the XJ220 wasn't series, right?). Powered by the faithful 5.0-litre supercharged V8, we expect it to produce at least 567bhp and potentially hit 200mph. It will take some aero and handling cues from the limited edition Project Seven, but unlike that car the F-type will be four-wheel drive – the better to properly deploy its performance (and chase the lucrative Turbo S market) – and finished in conventional coupe and roadster bodystyles. The price? Upwards of £100,000.



## 6 TESLA MODEL X

THE ALL-ELECTRIC SUV ERA STARTS HERE

**THE LONG-**awaited SUV companion to the game-changing Model S, the Model X could have been conventional and still wowed us. Instead, Tesla has conjured up an SUV with a drag coefficient of 0.24Cd – 20% better than any rival – and fitted it with an all-wheel drive, twin-motor electric powertrain that produces either 511bhp (90D model) or 752bhp in the P90D. Deploy its 'Ludicrous' mode and

it'll hit 60mph in 3.2sec. Yet the Model X also seats seven, tows 2.3 tonnes (an electric car first) and travels 250 miles on a charge. It's got the world's biggest panoramic windscreen, front doors that open automatically, and powered 'falcon wing' rear doors that can allegedly cope with the tightest parking space. Marty McFly eat your heart out. Expect prices around £65,000, and autumn deliveries.

## 7 ALPINE: THE COMEBACK COUPE

LE MANS-WINNING, WRC-WINNING ALPINE IS BACK!

**ALPINE IS** almost criminally under-appreciated. This is a marque that's conquered the Monte Carlo rally with a one-two-three finish – twice – won the inaugural World Rally Championship and taken overall victory at Le Mans. It resonates with the kind of engineering innovation that should have made it a true French competitor to Porsche, yet it's been languishing in a Renault-owned crypt for literally

two decades. Finally, though, a comeback is on the cards, in the form of a mid-engined coupe with a four-cylinder turbo motor and a paddleshift transmission. Shouldn't be tough to better the Alfa 4C, even if the Cayman isn't looking worried. Shame Renault seems to have taken a leaf out of Honda's book when it comes to the launch schedule; though we'll see a production-ready concept very soon, sales don't start until 2017.







8

## ASTON MARTIN DB11 TURBOCHARGED? A MERCEDES BACKBONE? THIS CAR REDEFINES ASTON MARTIN

### The first proper new Aston in a decade

Drum roll please: Aston Martin's comeback coupe, the DB11, is our most anticipated car of 2016. Aston has a new boss in ex-Nissan exec Andy Palmer, a supplier partnership with Mercedes-AMG, fresh funding, and in March, it'll all come together in the new flagship. The good news is that this DB11 will continue with the rumbling, Ford-built V12, but massively overhauled. It'll be downsized in capacity to improve economy and emissions, but twin-turbochargers will increase power to beyond 600bhp.

### There'll be a V8 model, too

The Mercedes link comes good with the addition of a secondary V8 variant to the DB11 range, using a version of the potent 4.0-litre twin-turbo found in the AMG GT. Too few cylinders for a cross-continental Grand Tourer? Not if the searing performance of the AMG GTS is anything to go by. And broadening the power and pricing scale of the range can only open the DB11 up to a wider customer base. All those 911 variants never did Porsche any harm...

### Electrics by Germany

As part of the Daimler tie-up the DB11 uses Mercedes' electrical architecture. That'll mean Aston's sat-nav and infotainment is dragged out of the dark ages, and opens up possibilities for digital instrumentation, connectivity and driver aids. Wiring harnesses are crucial to the user experience but costly and time-consuming for a low-volume sports car maker, so it's a smart move to short-circuit the process. The tie-up is evident in the S-class switchgear transplanted into prototypes: these will become bespoke buttons in the finished car.

### But it's still very much an Aston

Beneath the surface you'll find a highly-evolved development of Aston's bonded aluminium 'VH' architecture. Prototypes spied on test sport a wider track, all the better for handling agility, and to make more room for less agile occupants. It bodes well that ex-Lotus dynamics guru Matt Becker is in charge of DB11 sign-off. Expect composites to feature in the DB11's construction, using lessons learned in the Vantage GT12 and Vulcan to slash kerbweight.





Aston majesty meets  
Mercedes electronics.  
A marriage made in  
Gaydon, Affalterbach...  
and heaven?

## It'll move Aston's styling forwards

Unlike DBS, Virage and Vanquish before it, DB11 isn't yet another minor development of the still-beautiful but long-pensionable DB9. So the styling will be a conscious departure from DB9, albeit a careful one. James Bond's DB10 is, of course, previewing elements of the design on cinema screens nationwide, particularly in the body surfacing. That *Spectre* car is one of the reasons why the new Aston will be badged DB11, but it's also to denote a stepchange in Aston's development. There's precedent here: there was never an Aston DB8. When DB9 replaced DB7, it was just as beautiful, yet profoundly more modern and broader in ability. History repeating? Let's hope so.



Test mule gives away DB11's wider track. We expect a handling masterclass

RADOVAN VARIČAK/MOTOR FORECAST

## BUGATTI CHIRON

### YOU THOUGHT THE VEYRON WAS QUICK? THIS 275MPH PHENOMENON IS LINED UP TO BE THE 2016 SUPERCAR

**BUGATTI'S BEST** customers first saw the successor to the 267mph Veyron SS – named Chiron – at a preview last July. Its public premiere was inked in for the Geneva show in March 2016. Then the dieseldate storm clouds blew in, with VW cancelling or delaying 'non-vital' investments. But Bugatti's 275mph-topping, 1500bhp supercar is currently unaffected by the cuts, triggering a huge sigh of relief from enthusiasts the world over.

As Bugatti dealers in New York and Miami unveiled the brand's new showroom design, Dr Stefan Brungs, Bugatti sales and marketing chief, confirmed: 'North American customers are showing phenomenal interest in the next Bugatti super sports car. Its development is running at full speed.'

The Chiron is set to follow the Veyron blueprint closely: carbonfibre body structure, four-wheel drive and quad-turbo W16 engine. By revising 70% of the parts, the engineers have coaxed another 300 horses from the 8.0-litre W16, pushing it to 1500bhp; the dual-clutch 'box can handle nearly 1200lb ft of torque. Redeveloped tyres and a modified 4wd system with adaptive torque split and torque vectoring reportedly deliver a 2.3sec 0-62mph time. To go for 275mph v-max again requires a second key to drop the nose, lock the rear airbrake and shut certain air intakes.

The Chiron includes new design elements. Double-barrel headlights sit eye-level with the badge on top of the horseshoe grille, the roof-mounted air-intake scoops are dropped for semi-oval lateral apertures, and the engine is partly covered by a panel wearing Bugatti's trademark centre crease.

The finished car seduced a double-digit number of clients into signing contracts and pledging to pay deposits in two tranches, with the second triggering the delivery of the jewel-like speed key as an appetite-whetter. They won't be alone in itching to fire up the successor to the Veyron.



9

# HONDA NSX

TECH-LADEN NSX  
WILL BRING BRAINS  
AND BRAWN TO  
THE 911/AUDI R8/  
McLAREN 570S  
BATTLEGROUND

Words Ben Miller





**T**HE NAME MAY be the same and the remit similar – an everyday supercar with a road focus – but that’s where the similarities end, as they must for two cars developed a quarter of a century apart.

NSX 2.0 is a hybrid two-seat sports car set to cost in the region of £120,000. The bald figures are 565bhp from a car weighing 1725kg, a top speed of 191mph and a 0-62mph time of less than 3 seconds. Unlike the (less expensive) BMW i8 and (significantly more expensive) Porsche 918, the NSX is not a plug-in hybrid. The battery is small (1kWh for an EV range of about a mile and a half) and, like the three e-motors it feeds, exists only to enhance performance.

Aluminium with strategic use of carbonfibre (a single large floor panel) and high-strength steel, Honda claims the car’s structure sets class standards for rigidity, but then the NSX has been so long in development it’s been variously benchmarked against the (now defunct) Ferrari 458 Italia and the long-in-the-tooth Porsche 911 Turbo. Suspension is by double wishbones at the front and multi-link at the rear, controlled by magnetic dampers. Honda’s worked to reduce the front motors’ corrupting effect on the steering through clever geometry and double ball-joints on the lower suspension arms.

The engine’s a 3.5-litre, dry-sumped twin-turbocharged V6. There’s variable timing on the intake and exhaust cams but full VTEC, with variable lift, does not feature. With twin turbos and e-boosting (the 109lb ft rear e-motor works to deliver torque where the single-scroll turbos fall short), Honda deemed the system surplus to requirements. The engine drives the rear wheels through a home-grown twin-clutch 9-speed DCT transmission, with the e-motors calibrated to smooth the dips between gears with momentary

On paper the NSX weighs too much, but you wouldn’t know it when you hit the throttle



There are three electric motors in here. Three!

power surges – all part of the NSX’s ‘zero-delay’ philosophy.

If the NSX sounds like a complicated car – and its spec sheet, prolonged gestation and sheer weight would suggest it is – that feeling lasts only as long as opening the door and sliding over the slim sill into the low-slung but comfortable cockpit. Take a moment to appreciate the panoramic forward visibility – low dashboard, slim A-pillars – start the engine (if it stays silent you’re in EV-biased Quiet mode), grasp the oddly shaped wheel (pronounced bulges where you grasp it) and go.

For a car weighing more than 1700kg (a gluttonous 300kg more than a McLaren 570S), the NSX makes a good fist of feeling fast. ‘Zero delay’ might be a slight exaggeration but with the hybrid drivetrain delivering additional torque and all-wheel-drive traction, the Honda launches with a refined violence that can make you feel mildly unwell. There’s no need for any throttle modulation – just put your foot down and the low-slung coupe hooks up without a flicker of the traction control and gathers speed with a heavy insistence. It’s a job to keep the thing in gears, so closely stacked are the ratios. After the initial getaway that ferocity does bleed away as the car’s weight and the e-motors’ ability to help diminishes, but this remains an effortlessly fast car.

A shame then the gearbox itself isn’t nicer to use, and that the cacophony of acceleration is both a little ugly in note and dislocated from what the engine’s actually doing. The cheap-feeling shift paddles pull home with a disappointing ‘clack’ and offer little of the McLaren unit’s feel-good ▶



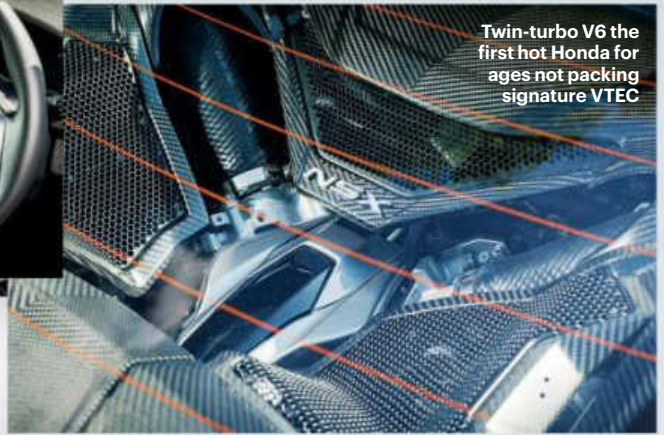


tactility. And while the exhaust note is nothing more than a muted if potent purr in normal driving, twirl the drive mode selector around to Sport or Sport+ and the racket from the artificial acoustics is less than spine tingling.

Take a moment to get the measure of the steering. The system is neither hefty and nuanced like a Porsche 911 GT3's, nor exhilarating in its speed and responsiveness like a Ferrari 488 GTB. Deliberately so, argues project leader Ted Klaus – 'We wanted driver confidence and a sense of complete control.' True enough as you build speed and slide into Sport+ (the third of four modes, which ramp up from Quiet to Track) you grow to admire the accuracy and reassuring paucity of slack in the NSX's steering. Response to your demands is immediate and accurate, and it's during these tentative enquiries that the first flickers of chassis magic make themselves known. At speed the car changes direction with an almost surreal ease, as if the physics that normally interfere with doing so have been subtly but tangibly re-written in your favour.

Soon you long to get stuck into a meaty complex of corners, happy that you have the car beneath you to monster them. Here the NSX's mixed-media powertrain promises unique advantages, being able to trim the force at each front wheel for an ideal cornering attitude without drive-sapping applications of the brakes. At the wheel you're vaguely aware of the car's intelligent powertrain at work but mainly there's just a sense of neat, composed togetherness, the Honda driving where you expect a slide.

Ultimately the NSX is inseparable from its hybrid drivetrain. Without it the Honda would be a lighter, less powerful, less complex car, and one closer in spirit to its namesake.



Twin-turbo V6 the first hot Honda for ages not packing signature VTEC



Cockpit is less of an event than it should be. Rather like the original NSX, it's a bit too Honda

But Honda, perhaps more than any other manufacturer, is a believer in progress through technology. Do the advantages of the NSX's hybrid powertrain negate the weight penalty? Given the car's real-world remit, Klaus is adamant that they do, and the way it powers out of tighter corners, shrugging off early stabs of throttle and translating them into big corner-exit speeds, would certainly seem to back him up, as would the car's eerie sense of agility without the instability. But still the NSX can't out-think 1725kg.

An extended road drive – as opposed to this all-too-brief first encounter – will answer a lot of questions, and perhaps banish the lingering fear that this car just doesn't feel as special as it should. Job done, Honda argues, if 'special' means obtrusive NVH, tiresome steering and a chassis prone to spats of oversteer. This is an everyday supercar, remember, but surely the game's moved on – what's not everyday about an R8, 570S (okay, the doors perhaps) and the 911 Turbo? Technically fascinating, impressively resolved and unfeasibly easy to drive fast, if the NSX has a failing it's that its road-biased remit has left it feeling a little aloof. The original's subtle brilliance emerged with time and miles. Perhaps it'll be the same story with its complex, enigmatic and fiercely ambitious successor.

#### Price

£120,000 (est)

#### Engine

3493cc twin-turbocharged V6 plus 3 x e-motors, 565bhp @ 6500rpm-7500rpm, 476lb ft @ 2000rpm

#### Transmission

Nine-speed paddleshift

DCT, four-wheel drive

#### Performance

Sub 3sec 0-62mph, 191mph, 30mpg (est), n/a g/km CO2

#### Weight

1725kg

#### Length/width/height

4470/1940/1215mm

#### On sale

Now

#### Rating

★★★★★





10

**RANGE ROVER'S 'X3'**  
THERE'S A GAP IN THE  
RANGE ROVER LINE-UP.  
NOT FOR LONG, WITH  
A SLEEK, ALUMINIUM  
4x4 ON THE WAY...



**THE EVOQUE** has been a gamechanger. It proved a smaller Range Rover was just as desirable as a big one, gave JLR the confidence to push more avant-garde design, and raked in cash. In late 2016, Land Rover will again mine this successful formula, with a new, fourth Range Rover model. Codenamed L560, the premium 4x4 is positioned between Evoque and Range Rover Sport – precisely where its rivals, the BMW X3 and Audi Q5, sit.

Sources say the five-door SUV's design takes the Evoque formula and makes it more aggressive and dynamic. Under the skin, L560 has an aluminium chassis, like the big Range Rovers and Jaguar F-Pace (pictured above). The lightweight construction will be novel in its class, and help maximise economy and cut emissions. While Jag's F-Pace has an on-road bias, L560 will have a higher ride height and be primed to conquer off-road, using its adaptable four-wheel drive selected by a Terrain Response controller. Core engine is the four-pot 'Ingenium' diesel, and its 2.0-litre petrol cousin should be ready for L560.

Range's X3 could sell up to 80,000 units a year, with prices starting around £40,000. We predict another smash hit – just like the Evoque.

11

## LAND ROVER DISCOVERY MAKES A SWISS ARMY KNIFE LOOK USELESS

**THE 2004** Discovery was arguably the least 'styled' car of the decade. Four doors without crease or contour, ugly but protective plastic wheelarches, myriad square or rectangular motifs from the rearmost sideglass to the chunky front bumper, Geoff Upex's creation was a Bauhaus masterpiece: maximum functionality, minimum adornment. To these eyes, it was an icon. To Land Rover, it was a polarising design statement that repelled too many prospects, and it had to go.

So this is the new Discovery, coming summer 2016. Admittedly, it's the 2014 Vision show car, but that car *IS* the new Discovery, down to its slanted waistline, slitty lamps and sculpted bodysides. It's every inch the vogueish crossover, rather than bluff SUV. Here's what else you can expect.

**THE CONCEPT**  
Range Rover majors on luxury, Defender on capability, and the Discovery family is all about versatility. 'In Discovery you'll see an absolute focus on this: they'll be the most versatile cars in the segments in which they compete,' then-group marketing director Phil Popham told CAR. 'Discoverys will offer efficient and creative use of space, re-configurability especially



of seating position, and the ability to take seven people comfortably.'

So far, so familiar. One detail that is changing is today's two-piece tailgate, which makes way for a conventional hatchback. Expect there to be a clever fold-out shelf, which you can use for a picnic table/seat/paparazzi shots of the next royal baby. Versatile, eh?

**THE TOYS**  
The Disco's five rear seats will fold, slide and stow independently, and will be fully motorised. Expect the configuration process to be effortless and options almost limitless. If there's four of you, power the middle row out of the way and wallow in legroom to shame a limousine. Seats will fold into mini-tables too. Sadly a lot of the Discovery Vision concept's technologies aren't yet ready for production – remote-control driving and laser-guided wading – but the Discovery

will have serious off-road ability. You set the obstacle on the Terrain Response dial – shifting sands, rocks, mud up to the wheel centres – and let the electronics precisely meter torque to axles and individual wheels for insatiable progress.

**THE STRUCTURE**  
The outgoing Discovery's Achilles' heel is its obesity, bellyflopping it into the list of the UK's heaviest cars. Blame the T5 platform, with its old-fashioned body-on-frame design. The new model will slash hundreds of kilos off the kerbweight, by switching to the aluminium monocoque chassis that underpins the big Range Rovers. Agility, performance and economy will be transformed, especially with the return of the four-pot Disco: a 200bhp+ 2.0-litre diesel with twin turbos is rumoured to be in the works. There'll be six-cylinder, V8 and hybrid engines too. Expect sales in the autumn.





12

## FERRARI F12 TDF

### FERRARI DESIGN STRAYS INTO MAX POWER TERRITORY



#### WHAT IS IT?

Not a turbodiesel, despite silly name. In fact 'tdf' stands for Tour de France, an endurance road race Ferrari used to serially win in the '50s (well, they couldn't call it F1 right now, could they?). They've basically taken the F12 berlinetta and turned it up to 11. It's road legal, but if you don't live at Nardo you'll struggle to exploit it.

#### AERODYNAMICS

They've gone to town – doubling the F12's aero efficiency by reshaping every panel and then punching clever holes all over the place. Race-car brainpower abounds in the front splitter, dive planes, floor wings, louvres and the bonnet's signature aerobridge. The rear spoiler's got huger, and the rear diffuser's three 'active flaps' can now eat unsuspecting small mammals.

#### POWERTRAIN

F12's naturally aspirated 6.3-litre V12 gets pumped from 730bhp to 769, with 520lb ft of torque from 2500rpm. The engine's been race-fettled using F1-inspired variable-intake geometry trumpets (no less), and the F1 dual-clutch 'box has been wholly remapped, with 6% shorter ratios, 30% faster upshifts and 40% faster downshifts.

#### PERFORMANCE

It's as insanely quick as you'd hope, hitting 62mph in 2.9sec and achieving 'in excess of 211mph', putting it in LaFerrari territory minus the hybrid gubbins. More curious is that the front tyres are wider than the rears, quashing understeer but surely making lurid oversteer inevitable? Enter 'Virtual Short Wheelbase' – Ferrari's first rear-wheel-steer system.

#### INTERIOR

Here's where you can see for yourself how they've saved a massive 110kg over the F12. Instrument pods and doors are carbonfibre, floor mats are bare aluminium and they've even pinched the glovebox. Few loved ones will be impressed at having to hold the tin of boiled sweets while you enter the gravel trap backwards.

#### CAN I BUY ONE?

If you're quick – they're making just 799. It's vulgar to talk about price, so Ferrari doesn't, but you needed £240k to nab the boggo F12, so this bad boy will surely start with a three. The bigger question is why would you? With more bulges than Lou Ferrigno's trousers it's the surely the loucheest, most taste-averse Ferrari yet.

13

## PORSCHE BOXSTER/CAYMAN

MID-ENGINE TWINS GO FOUR-POT

**MOVE ALONG NOW**, nothing to see here? While the imminent new Boxster might display the trademark, modest facelifted Porsche tendencies – new bumpers, tweaked front and rear lamp graphics – this early 2016 car is a very big deal. That's because it's running a four-cylinder engine. It's not a V4 like Porsche's 919 Le Mans-winner's, although the base Boxster's opposite piston engine does share its 2.0-litre capacity. The advanced, direct-injection design gets only one fixed-vane turbo. The outgoing Boxster six makes 261bhp: expect the new flat-four to best that with up to 300bhp, and monster its 206lb ft of torque thanks to its forced induction.

Pricier Boxsters will also run a turbo four, a 2.5-litre, with up to 365bhp for the GTS edition. Theoretically, the high-end four is brawny enough to replace all six-cylinder units bar the Boxster Spyder/Cayman GT4's spiciest 3.8-litre.

There's another development: Porsche will switch the range hierarchy, with the fixed-head Cayman becoming the entry-level model. Sources say it will be priced more aggressively (it currently starts at £39,694), to boost awareness and sales. The revamped 911's upgraded infotainment system will complete the package.



Next year's Boxster: fewer cylinders but more power



**Bentley Bentayga**  
The 187mph hyper-SUV

Okay, to say we're all 'looking forward' to it is stretching things, but the world's fastest and most opulent SUV is unignorable. W12-powered, 2.4 tonnes, £160k and looks to scare its own mother, it's the loudest statement yet in the age of China-chasing. Will be the auto event of the year.



**Fiat 124**  
The Italian MX-5

If this doesn't float your barchetta, check your pulse. To the charm, rwd chassis delicacy and reliability of Mazda's roadster Fiat adds new front and rear ends plus turbocharged 1.4-litre power and a name that's been evoking passions for half a century. Here in the autumn.



**Porsche Panamera**  
The no longer ugly four-door

Someone's tapped Porsche on the shoulder and pointed out that four-door coupes can look sexy. And here's the result. With a new platform underneath spawning everything from a junior version to the next Bentley Continental, it should be the four-door coupe we craved.

**Alfa Romeo Giulia**  
The rear-wheel-drive 3-series challenger

Petrolheads hold their breath as we wait to see if this handsome saloon is, finally, the Alfa to shake us from our 3-series, XEs and C-classes. Rear-driven, with an engine range led by a snorting V6, and laced with lightweight tech, it has the weapons. We'll know in the spring.



## THE 12 OTHER CARS WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO IN 2016



**Maserati Levante**  
The Sexy Utility Vehicle

Swoopy roofline and tiny boot may make Italy's entry one of the least useful in the global SUV contest, but it should have enough style to make Bentayga look like a shoebox. Wisely not borrowing sister brand Jeep's Cherokee platform, Maser sticks with Ghibli chassis – and V6 engines too.



**Audi TT RS**  
The TT that thinks it's a 911

Bursting out of its cutesy coupe suit like a frustrated superhero this rabid TT ekes 400bhp from its 2.5-litre turbo five-pot, putting Carrera S into sharp focus for 40% less cash. Okay it lacks the Porsche's rear-engined magic but its techy cabin is simply sensational. Can Audi's chassis live up to it?



**Ford Edge**  
The global Q5-botherer

Americans have been living on the Edge since 2006, and now, with an all-new model ready to roll, it's our turn (and Europe's). Based on a platform it shares with Mondeo, S-Max and co, we're hoping the Edge will mix Kuga civility with a cheeky dose of the US chunkiness to which we're all susceptible.



**Chevrolet Camaro**  
The below-radar muscle car

Never quite the blue-collar hero in Europe that Mustang is, Camaro is a deliciously American icon, and the sixth generation looks intriguing. Design remains familiar, but underneath is an all-new lightweight (but 28% stiffer) chassis, plus the option of big brother Corvette's updated small-block V8.



**Lotus 3-Eleven**  
The supercar-shamer

The priciest Lotus ever (at £96k) is also the fastest (at 180mph). Proving that the Elise chassis will last either forever or as long as they want it to, the 2-Eleven gets 444bhp from its 3.5-litre Toyota V6, and packs 500bhp-per-tonne thanks to new resin infusion composite tech. Coming April, ready or not.

**BMW M4 GTS**  
The fastest road car BMW has ever made

So, 0-62mph in 3.8sec, 190mph (limited!), titanium exhaust, no rear seats, 700 limited edition, £121,770. And it looks like... *this*. MotoGP safety car turns reality, water-injection and all, leaving us camped on a Munich pavement until next March.



**Merc AMG GT3**  
The supercar GT racer

Above is an FIA homologated GT racer with a 6.3-litre V8, but much as we're looking forward to that, it's the roadgoing offspring that we await. Also tipped to be badged GT3, it promises 585bhp from a twin-turbo V8, 200mph and a £125k price tag. Even hotter 'GT-R' may follow. Nurse, the screens!



**Seat Leon SUV**  
The Spanish Tiguan

Stay with us here – we know compact SUVs tend to invoke ECG traces flatter than Bonneville, but the Leon's a massively underrated budget Golf with a frisky streak. We're confident of more of the same here, especially as Seat's 20V20 concept car at this year's Geneva show (above) looked a corker.



14

# JAGUAR F-PACE NUMBERS SAY IT WILL TOPPLE THE MACAN, VOWS JAG

Words James Taylor

## The Macan is magic. It's laid down a mark

Is it absurd that an SUV needs to be exciting to drive? Not these days, so Jaguar's F-Pace doesn't have any choice but to compete. To avoid undermining 70-odd years of hard-earned brand identity, to justify the 'practical sports car' marketing blurb and to help differentiate it from its Range Rover twin a little further down the pipeline, F-Pace needs to be ballerina-nimble. And that means taking on the Porsche Macan, the dynamic benchmark not just for the 4x4 genre but a car agile enough to outpoint more than a few sports cars too. Jaguar's anything but shy about the F-Pace's credentials, however. It won't just match Macan, but beat it, says Jag – and **it's using stats to prove it.**

## The chassis sounds competitive

Compared with the Macan's Audi Q5-sourced foundations, the F-Pace's modular underpinnings have given the engineering team more freedom – to put the wheels in the best place for handling and interior space, and the pillars in the best place to see round – and fewer body-in-white hardpoints to work around. If the raw numbers are anything to go by, there are multiple dynamic wins too. Jaguar claims the F-Pace's double-wishbone **front suspension** possesses a whopping **50% greater lateral stiffness** than that of the Porsche, and its integral-link rear 35%. **Weight distribution is a dreamy 50:50**, and the wheelbase is longer than the Macan's – good for ride quality, for interior space and for more predictable handling.

## Pace isn't a misnomer

F-Pace hasn't just borrowed the F-type's tail lights but its 3.0-litre supercharged V6, too. Go for the top **375bhp S variant and 62mph's come and gone in 5.5sec.** Porsche's 395bhp Macan Turbo range-topper is swifter by 0.8sec, but don't be surprised to see a pacier-still SVO-developed F-Pace lock horns with it a little further down the line.

Meanwhile, the **296bhp, 516lb ft V6 diesel F-Pace is hardly a slowcoach**, despatching the benchmark sprint in 6.2sec. And the four-pot Ingenium diesel volume sellers juggle a useful 318lb ft with a **fleet-friendly 129g/km CO2 rating.** Porsche doesn't have a four-pot Macan diesel: 161g/km is as low as its V6 can go.

Rear suspension: 35% stiffer than Macan's, for precision handling



## It's good for the planet (kind of)

Jaguar really likes aluminium, and the F-Pace contains more of it than any other crossover. 80% of its body-in-white is made from the stuff, 33% of which is recycled.

**The bare shell weighs 298kg, and model-for-model the F-Pace is lighter than its closest rivals,** although perhaps not by quite as much as you might expect. Base rear-wheel-drive diesel models start from 1665kg; add around 100kg for four-wheel drive. Still, the lightest of the Macans weighs in at 1845kg.

## Grace, pace – and actual space

It's not just about Porsche-chasing: the F-Pace also needs to match X3, Q5 et al for comfort, practicality and showroom appeal. The numbers look promising here too; it might be an X3 rival, but the (admittedly larger) **Jag's 650-litre boot is more comparable to an X5's.** And seats down, its 1740 litres and Ikea-friendly 1.8m-plus load-length both out-cargo the Q5. Jaguar reckons there'll be no passenger too lanky for the rear cabin, and that they'll have to put up with less noise there than in a Q5 or X3 (and **6dB less than in a Macan,** Jag's at pains to point out).

**Jaguar really likes aluminium; F-Pace packs more of it than any other crossover**



### The numbers game: F-Pace vs Macan

JAGUAR F-PACE S 3.0 SUPERCHARGED		PORSCHE MACAN TURBO (3.6)
From £51,450	Price	£60,994
375bhp/332 lb ft	Power/torque	395bhp/406lb ft
5.5sec 0-62mph, 155mph (limited)	Performance	4.8sec 0-62mph, 165mph
31.7mpg, 209g/km CO2	MPG/CO2	30.7mpg, 216g/km CO2
Cd 0.34	Drag coefficient	Cd 0.37
1861kg	Weight	2000kg
202bhp per tonne	Power-to-weight ratio	198bhp per tonne
650/1740 litres	Boot space (seats up/down)	501/1500 litres

## All the toys

Tether up to eight devices to in-car wi-fi, plug them into four USB points, marvel at widescreen **360-degree street-view navigation** on the instrument cluster, or check how much fuel you've got on your smartphone... there's enough gadgetry within the F-Pace to keep you thumbing through the manual for years. And if you're a fan of touchscreens, the **10.2in behemoth in the dashboard's as big as it gets** in the 4x4 class. Meanwhile, the F-Pace's stereo cameras can keep it within its lane, clock pedestrians and pump the brakes automatically with the best of them.

## It can out-bling all-comers

Like big wheels? F-Pace obliges with the sector's biggest, ranging from **CO2-friendly 18s right up to penny farthing-spec 22s.** Opt for the marginally more demure 21 and 20in rims and, thanks to deliberately plumper-than-average sidewalls, Jaguar claims the F-Pace offers greater kerbing protection than you know who.

But the best numbers of all? **F-Pace starts at £34,170, and maintains a £6k advantage over the Porsche** up the range. If the F-Pace lives up to Jaguar's words – and figures – it should be very special. We'll find out in the spring.







15

Words CJ Hubbard

# FOR THE GT RETURNS TO FORD A NEW RAC



# DGT

## LE MANS, AND GIVES ER FOR THE ROAD

Photography Steffen Jahn



A

it are deceptively murky, despite initial confirmation of over 600bhp, carbonfibre construction and exceptional aero. It certainly *seems* like a significant blip on our radar – just how worried should the establishment be?

This has been a secretive project right from the start. Genesis was a small team, located in a Dearborn basement, working late nights and weekends – the only time they could push the car outside and see what it looked like in daylight. The faintest flutterings of rumour heralded its arrival at the Detroit motor show in January, but still it was a shock – suddenly there, a new Ford GT. Not just in concept but as a statement of definite intent, subsequently reinforced at Le Mans in June where Ford unveiled the racing version, and with it a pledge to be on the grid at La Sarthe the following year, the ultimate 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the original's famous one-two-three victory.

That, however, is about as sentimental as the new GT gets. It most definitely is not some kind of self-congratulatory heritage pastiche. Concrete details include the structure: a full carbonfibre tub, clad in carbonfibre panels, with aluminium components front and rear to cradle the engine, mount the suspension and tolerate crash testing. Much like a modern McLaren. Instead of a fire-breathing, old-

**T THIS MOMENT** in time, the new Ford GT is like an iceberg in the supercar sea. We've seen it, it's real, we even know when it's going to arrive; but exactly how big the impact is going to be when it hits depends very much on what's lying beneath the surface. And the waters surrounding

school V8, the engine is a race-proven 3.5-litre twin-turbo Ecoboost V6, driving the rear wheels via a seven-speed Getrag twin-clutch automatic. The suspension uses in-board push-rod dampers and an unusual-enough-to-patent spring-and-torsion-bar combination – an 'active' set-up to go with the active aerodynamics. The brakes are Brembo carbon-ceramics. The interior features a digital gauge cluster, paddleshifters and a steering wheel as laden with buttons as any from Ferrari. But this lot aside, Ford has been reluctant to reveal any specifics.

Dave Pericak, head of Ford Performance – the organisational umbrella that now encompasses Ford Racing and the blue oval's high-performance production cars – is keen to apologise for the cloak and dagger. 'It's a bit more sensitive right now than it would typically be,' he says, 'and that's only because we are getting ready to race.' The new GT's first competitive event is set to be the Rolex 24 at Daytona in January, while the production version won't be ready until the following November. But even this builds intrigue. The road car and the racing car are different beasts, aren't they? Think again.

'Other than the obvious changes you have to make when you go racing – the fixed wing, other rules and regulations you just have to follow – the road car *is* the race car and the race car *is* the road car,' Pericak explains. So much so that it's difficult to examine one without reference to the other.

**'Other than the obvious changes the road car *is* the race car and the race car *is* the road car'**





Carbon dashboard is part of the structural tub. Imagine it! They had to sign off the dash first

In fact, we're going to go out on a limb here and suggest that to find the last time a supercar and a racing car were this closely aligned you'd have to go back to the heady days of the Porsche 911 GT1 and the Mercedes CLK GTR. The GT isn't being positioned to compete at that level – those cars were gunning for outright victory, while the GT LM racer is entered in the GTE Pro class, several rungs below today's front-running, hybrid-enhanced LMP1 prototypes – yet it's clear that Ford is taking the process exceptionally seriously.

'There is very little lag between road-car and race-car development,' Pericak confirms. 'It's very challenging to do both at the same time, but it's a huge benefit in that you're able to design big things into the base car that will help you with racing. The program was conceived from the start as a road car, but once we decided we were going racing they were running in parallel.'

Given this insight it doesn't take a genius to spot the prioritisation: the compact, teardrop-shaped cabin, so remarkably reminiscent of current LMP1 cars; the extensive use of carbonfibre, and the choice of Canadian race-car engineering firm and carbonfibre experts Multimatic as development and assembly partner. Then there's the engine's previous life winning IMSA ▶





endurance races, which it's been doing for the last two years already – including the 2014 Daytona 24 hours and Sebring 12 hours. 'We're obviously looking for the best power-to-weight ratio and the smallest frontal area,' says Pericak. 'Every curve, every line, *everything* on this car has been put on there for performance, and especially knowing that we were going racing.'

Yet there's more, because when asked what he thinks is *the* most innovative aspect of the new car, Pericak replies that he can't tell us until it's taken to the circuit in anger. Holy hell! What else is the GT hiding? Something Ford feels gives it a competitive advantage, that's for sure – and probably something to do with the torsion bar and spring suspension combo. Since torsion bars and springs usually do the same job, Pericak does admit that part of the system's smarts is the ability to use both together or lock the springs out, radically altering the effective spring rate, on the fly. 'It allows us to really change the character of this car. It's really unique, and really performing extremely well.' Then he adds, 'This is the area where I've got to watch what I say.'

The most innovative aspect he can talk about? 'How we've been able to lightweight the vehicle, and do it in a way that is extremely balanced.' Yes, 'lightweight' is a verb now, that's how crucial it is. As for how innovative, check out the cabin. All of the carbon on the inside is part of the structural tub, including the dashboard – a development interior designer Amko Leenarts believes is an industry first. Doing this meant the fundamental bones of the cockpit had to be signed off almost immediately because the

Beneath Vader's vest lies a 3.5-litre twin-turbo V6, perhaps packing 700bhp

tub's design had to be fixed in order to allow the engineering work to commence.

'We had a really good design philosophy from day one,' Leenarts says, looking what you'd swear was relieved, 'which was about getting it as lightweight as possible, celebrating negative spaces, getting in a simplicity that was easy to read.' For instance? Fixed seats, the dashtop 'wing' that hides the wiring and echoes the exterior's flying buttresses, and the graphics used in the digital instrument cluster, which are specifically designed for peripheral viewing; 'We don't want anything distracting when you are driving that car.' 200mm of steering wheel reach adjustment and moveable pedals serve to make the driver comfortable, in place of heavier seat adjustment mechanisms. 'Everything that we've done is to take weight out of the car,' Pericak reinforces. 'If we didn't need it, we didn't put it in there.'

But wait a minute – is this starting to feel like Nürburgring syndrome at its worst? Could the new Ford GT be so focused on delivering a decent racing performance that the road car is in danger of becoming unenjoyable? Even undrivable? Not according to Pericak: 'I've got quite a few hours logged already

**'It's not like anything you've ever driven before. It's the most well-balanced car I've been in – ever'**







Shift paddles long and sharp enough to double as a cheese knife. Brembos are carbon ceramics



## New Ford GT: road car or race car?

**THE SHORT** answer is both. But there are differences, most of which show the sophistication of the road car. To go racing, Ford has to remove the active aerodynamics, while GTE regulations mandate no more than 500bhp

– bad news for rivals, as that's 100bhp less than what has already proven durable over 24 hours winning races in a Daytona Prototype. Chip Ganassi Racing ran that car, and it will run the GTs, too, alongside Felix Sabates. The actual road

car engine is an updated, enhanced version of the racing unit. Can the new GT take class honours on its anniversary return to Le Mans? Dave Pericak: 'All I can say is this: we're going to be ready to race and I hope everyone else is too.'

and when you drive the vehicle it's not like anything you've ever driven before. For me personally, I can say it's the most well-balanced, well-behaved car that I've been in, ever. And it's *extremely* intuitive the minute you get behind the wheel.' What is it like compared to the previous version – 2003's mid-engined V8-powered reimagining of the GT40? 'They are in two separate worlds, it's not even a close competition.'

Ford isn't officially saying what that means for outright performance yet, but the portents are there. 'We're putting a V6 into a supercar,' Pericak reiterates, 'and we're *extremely* confident that we will be as good or better than the rest of the supercars. And that's a heck of a statement to make, right?' The original claim of 'over 600bhp' is surely closer to 700 in reality.

Target weight must be in the region of McLaren, say 1200kg dry. The aerodynamics are clearly on display. Even with the traction limitations of rear-wheel drive, 0-62mph has got to be sub 3.0sec, and top speed well over 200mph.

Ford also isn't saying how many GTs it will build, but Pericak confirms 'it will be a very low number'. Not just because of the production limitations with carbonfibre, but because Ford knows it's important to maintain a sense of prestige. As for the price, he says we should look to the Aventador; in the UK that means around £266k. Yet he's adamant Ford is 'not doing this to try to get rich'. So why is it doing it at all?

'It's the embodiment of what's great at Ford Motor Company. A lot of people ask why are you doing it? And I always love to give the fun answer of "because we can". But that's not the real answer. The real answer is we're doing the Ford GT because we want to showcase and demonstrate our engineering prowess and all of the capability that we have at Ford. Showcase it, be proud of it, and have it be the pinnacle of performance.'

Can the GT possibly live up to that kind of hype? Watch this space... *car*

@ir\_427

Although this is the concept car, Ford says 95% of it is locked down for production





# SAVE UP TO **65%\*** WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE TO **car** TODAY

\*65% saving when you choose the package option



Get CAR in print  
& on iPad for just  
£38



## OFFER 1 PRINT EDITION

Direct Debit **£33**

Credit/Debit Card **£38**

Overseas Credit/Debit Card  
**from £65**



## OFFER 2 iPAD EDITION

Direct Debit **£31**

Credit/Debit Card **£34**

Overseas Credit/Debit Card  
**from £34**



## OFFER 3 PRINT & iPAD

Direct Debit **£38**

Credit/Debit Card **£43**

Overseas Credit/Debit Card **from £70**

# SUBSCRIBE ONLINE OR BY PHONE QUOTING ELF1

**WWW.GREATMAGAZINES.CO.UK/CAR - 01858 438884** OVERSEAS READERS CALL +44 1858 438 828

Terms & Conditions Subscriptions will start with the next available issue. The minimum term is 12 issues. After your first 12 issues (1 year) your subscription will be continue at this offer price, every 12 issues thereafter unless you are notified otherwise. You will not receive a renewal reminder and the Direct Debit payments will continue to be taken unless you tell us otherwise. This offer closes on 30th Dec 2015. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Cost from landlines for 01 numbers per minute are (approximate) 2p to 10p. Cost from mobiles per minute (approximate) 10p to 40p. Costs vary depending on the geographical location in the UK. You may get free calls to some numbers as part of your call package - please check with your phone provider. Order lines open 8am-9.30pm (Mon-Fri), 8am-4pm (Sat). UK orders only. Overseas? please phone +44 1858 438828 for further details. Calls may be monitored or recorded for training purposes.



G I A N T  
T E S T

# Comfort

Jaguar XE  
2.0 R-Sport



Audi A4 2.0  
TDI S line





# and joy

**Entertaining, handsome and versatile, a good sports saloon is the answer to most questions. But does the new Audi A4 have answers for Jaguar's XE and an updated BMW 3-series?**

Words Ben Miller | Photography John Wycherley

BMW 320d xDrive  
M Sport







**I F YOU'RE OF** the opinion that a car's engine is its heart, soul and reason for being, now's the time to either stick to your guns and walk away or consider giving a little ground. While the modern 2.0-litre turbodiesel four is many things – fuel efficient, gutsy, pretty refined and flexible of

delivery – it is not a thing of charm. If some engines can be so electrifying in their response, delivery and soundtrack as to appear alive, shrieking to stratospheric redlines as they raise goosebumps like molehills on your arms – more orchestras than benign collections of rods, castings and gears – the turbodiesel four struggles to deliver much magic with its motive power.

That's not the point, of course. Much more crucial are the low CO<sub>2</sub> emissions required for favourable tax, not to mention the frugality and range to spend whole days on the road stopping only for Starbucks, M&S falafel and comfort breaks. But where does that leave you and I, rare creatures for whom an emotional connection to their transport is all-important? How should the sports saloon best deal with such an unpromising start? Smother the engine away and distract you with toys? Deliver a chassis so engaging you fail to notice the engine? Little bit of both?

On the evidence of the new A4, Audi feels that since a 2.0-litre TDI four (other engines are available of course, from a 99g/km CO<sub>2</sub>, 148bhp petrol 1.4 to an imperious 268bhp TDI V6) can't be engineered to make your soul sing, its machinations should be muffled into insignificance. At speed on the M4, Bath-bound, rain lashing across the Audi's now slightly tauter, more chiselled prow like a land-locked Atlantic storm, there's no sound but that of your chosen audio media, the distant roar of surface water being flung into wheel-wells and the steady, rhythmic bass-line of your own pulse. Engine noise only gets close to intrusive on cold start or during a full-throttle kick-down. Acoustic glazing (standard for the windscreen; a must-have £450 option on the side and rear windows) and a refined engine in a more streamlined form all contribute to the A4's impressive inner calm; suitably *technik* solutions that avoid the weight penalty implicit in tonnes of sound-deadening material and a big tub of glue (this A4's up to 120kg lighter than its predecessor).

This tranquility suits the new A4's interior very well, the luxurious absence of noise mirroring the cabin's conspicuous paucity of anything cheap, ugly or nasty. The best interior here combines more generous accommodation (disappointingly, the Audi's adequate rear legroom is unique in this company) with an economy of clutter, ▶



This road's pretty straight but the new A4 isn't bothered if the going twists and turns like OJ's case for the defence



Audi feels big enough inside to need planning permission. On space it's a winner





In the A4 there's  
no noise but your  
chosen media and  
the rhythmic bass  
of your own pulse





## Giant Test: Audi A4 vs rivals

all-pervading light and a feel-good tactility to all that you interact with. Previously the universally praised king of intuitive MMI, Audi's tweaked system might be progress but it doesn't feel like it on first acquaintance. The principles remain the same, with an iDrive-style rotary controller flanked by buttons mirroring icons on either side of the menu page. But while the number of buttons has halved, their on-screen functionality is no longer labelled. Infuriatingly you can also dig pretty deeply into some menus, your full attention diverted from the road, only to be told your request is forbidden on the move.

With time you learn, of course, just as you also learn that the touchpad atop the rotary controller likes its letters written a certain way (part of the £1450 tech pack that also brings the multi-function steering wheel, upgraded nav and wireless phone charging), and that Virtual Cockpit (part of the £975 light and vision pack) is independent of the main screen and controlled from the steering wheel, so you'll get no joy bringing up a phone number on the main display and then punching the call button on the wheel.

That said, Virtual Cockpit is so good, particularly during urban navigation, that once sampled its high-resolution brilliance and simple functionality render the main screen all but redundant. So you turn it off, especially at night, mostly to try to cut down on the wanton levels of light pollution in the cabin. With back-lighting to almost every control and feature on the dash, door and centre console, you fear being mistaken for a small town by passing pilots.

So far, so predictable; the A4 is refined, nice inside and spacious. But there is a surprise, and it's the car's new-found interest in driving. Being front-wheel drive the Audi ploughs its own furrow in this company, but crucially it's now far less keen to simply plough on. Onlookers may enquire as to whether or not it's the new model without a shred of conviction – blame the painfully evolutionary if not entirely



Handsome 19-inch rims and still the XE floats – how do they do that?



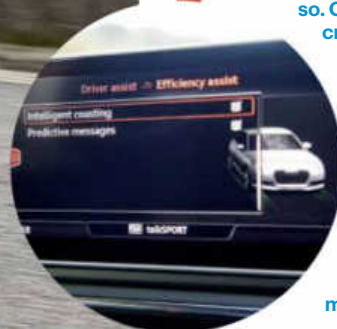
Virtual Cockpit; wow friends, never get lost, feel like a nap-of-the-earth fighter pilot



Is it the new one?  
Reg says yes,  
styling isn't quite  
so sure

### KEY TECH: AUDI A4 Efficiency assist

Claiming the potential to reduce thirst by 10%, the A4's optional predictive efficiency assistant works with the adaptive cruise control to achieve more parsimonious progress where possible, backing off the throttle ahead of junctions and tighter corners and coasting if it decides you can afford to do so. On cars without adaptive cruise the nav and traffic sign recognition still evaluate the road ahead, flashing up a green foot-on-the-gas icon to suggest you ease off, you speed-hungry planet-wrecker. Mildly patronising perhaps, but you can't fault the tech or the motive behind it.







'And here comes Jo Winkelhock in the BMW, flat through the botanical gardens...'

unsuccessful exterior form – but from the driver's seat you're left in no such doubt. Where previously rapid progress on damp roads was an exercise in patience, blind faith and understeer management, the new A4 is communicative and talented. The front end, on this meatily-tyred S line example certainly, is impressively grippy and dependable, refusing to wash wide of your intended line even as you supply more and more excuses for it to do so. And when your ambition exceeds what's possible the car's response is nicely neutral, with an as-one shift to tuck the nose in as you come off the brakes and a willingness to accept full throttle but moments later without complaint.

Things can still get scrappy if you're too keen to overlap steering and throttle but in front-wheel-drive form the new A4 is a rapid cross-country conveyance; composed, almost parental in its endless acts of forgiveness and not entirely unexciting. It also feels like the quickest car here, its weight advantage and slick transmission (avoid the ponderous, joy-free manual) lending A-road overtakes a welcome brevity. Yes in S line spec there's still plenty of fidgeting on rougher roads and no, great swathes of slide-happy BMW pilots are unlikely to flock to their nearest Audi centre, but no longer must A4 drivers trade any interest in the act of driving for their comfort, refinement and on-point design.

Sadly, to an extent, XE fans must endure the reverse. Less than a year in and the Jaguar's cockpit already feels ripe

for a makeover. Harsh? Perhaps, and certainly there's little overtly wrong with either the quality or functionality of the XE's interior space (cosy rear quarters excepted) but so lofty are the standards set by the other two that the Jaguar falls conspicuously short. By miles? Not at all, but in every regard it's a little less polished, a little more cost-conscious in feel, a little clunkier. The instrument display lacks anything approaching the clarity and dexterity of the Audi's, while the accuracy and speed of iDrive shows up the intrinsic shortcomings of the Jaguar's touchscreen, if not any specific flaw in its implementation.

So it's a little basic, but the driving position fits like a hot bath; welcoming, nicely low-slung and endlessly comfortable, the XE gunning for snug and coupe-like while the A4 aims for New York loft. Get moving and you're struck first by the engine's relative lack of refinement in this company. It clonks into life like a con-rod's kissed a bore (disarming stop/start becomes a reflex action) and communicates too much of its labours to the cabin, whether it's midrange tremors or light-load whistles and bleats. Thankfully this is followed moments later by a ▶

**The new A4 is composed and almost parental in its endless acts of forgiveness**



## KEY TECH: BMW 320d xDrive



The 3-series' four-wheel drive runs a 40:60 front/rear drive split until provoked, when the car can shunt almost all the available drive to the front or rear axle as required to fight wheelspin, oversteer or understeer. The result is a more neutral, hooked-up drive. While there are price (£1500), weight (85kg), CO2 (10g/km) and efficiency (5.3mpg) penalties, the payoff is a very versatile 3-series. A4 can be had with quattro, naturally. XE relies on traction electronics.

nascent fondness for the unobtrusive deftness of the eight-speed gearbox and the brilliance – not too strong a word, honestly – of the chassis.

The steering may not be the last word in road-at-your-palms texture but it is perfectly weighted, reassuringly accurate and devoid of any confidence-sapping numbness. So when the hedges are close, the lines of sight tight and the corners unpredictable and blind the XE is king, feeling inches smaller than its German rivals thanks to the accuracy with which you can place the car and plot your course. Throw in a few ripples, ruts and lumps and the Jaguar moves further ahead, its suspension adroitly controlling wheel movement and checking its effect on the body. Where the A4 jitters down rough roads like a five-seat long-board, steering gently

tugging this way and that, the Jaguar just flows. In this form the XE hasn't the firepower to feel overtly rear-wheel drive but there's balance and traction in spades, the car firing from even greasy corners with the ease you'd expect of a chassis also available with a 335bhp supercharged V6.

Once you've clocked the XE's dynamic fluency it doesn't take long to grow to really admire it; that supple ride wedded to the meaty, incisive sensation of the front tyres setting the car onto a new course with every tiny input of the wheel – no

delay, no doubt. It's a superiority born of the XE's unique-in-class double-wishbone front suspension and, presumably, some very sweetly judged calibration. After a run in the Jaguar both Germans feel standoffish and needlessly fidgety. Lob in that great driving position and seamless auto (preferably paired with the optional metal paddleshifters) and the XE cements its position as the new 3-series when it comes to outright driver appeal: truly the Jaguar is a sports saloon to buy with your heart.

But what of the actual 3-series, 40 years on from the quiet revolution of the brilliant E21's arrival? The blink-and-you'll-miss-them changes for 2015 may be subtle – revised lights, upgraded interior materials, auto-blipping on manual gearboxes, smoother shifts for the autos, strengthened suspension, revised damper and steering settings – but they also demonstrate the kind of fastidious, laser-focused self-improvement that's kept the 3-series at the top pretty much for as long as the model's existed.

While the BMW can't match the Audi for bank-vault NVH, road and engine noise are better suppressed than they are in the Jaguar and, what's more, the 3-series steals a helpful headstart by being blessed with the least diesel-like engine to start with. In refinement, the noises it makes and the nature of its power delivery the BMW motor is the least overtly diesel, if not quite as adept at impersonating a petrol as Munich's bigger sixes.

So immediately you're happy, and thinking this might be some best-of-both-worlds magic bullet. Inside the mood is serious – straight-cut fringe after the Audi's light, bouncy tresses – but there's much to like: cuddly, supportive seats; just-so driving position; exquisitely textured rubber – steady – on the door pulls; the shift lever that fits so beautifully ▶



▶ BMW's £1250 assists package includes collision avoidance and lane departure warning. Priceless if the Red Bull lets you down

### Auto or DIY?

Expensive-feeling shift levers and a gearlever that's the right way round (forward for down) encourage a hands-on approach to gear selection. Go manual to save £1690

### Grasp the python

F30 sticks with 3-series tradition; fat steering wheel rim, great ergonomics and a dash that's gently pushing back towards being driver-centric



### Not iDrive!

Jaguar Land Rover's rotary gear selector has its haters but it works well and looks and feels classy. By contrast the touchscreen suffers a little with turbo lag, but you'll live

### Seat of the pants

Great driving position and brilliant steering shine from the moment you move away. General ambience doesn't, but class standards are seriously high

▶ InControl ports your smartphone into the infotainment. BMW and Audi offer similar integration

### Sound of quality

Mute the audio to enjoy refinement you had to buy a Rolls for not all that long ago. Bang & Olufsen stereo upgrade inessential but superb

▶ Hit 'view' on the wheel to toggle between this and bigger conventional clocks. Head-up display is belt and braces

### R8 steering!

In the design of the wheel at least, if not quite in action. Master its controls and, together with Virtual Cockpit, the main screen becomes almost superfluous





1st

The complete all-rounder works brilliantly in every regard. A little po-faced perhaps, but topping a class this competitive is no laughing matter

2nd

Lacks refinement and interior flair but punches back hard with superb ride and steering. A 21st century MkII of sorts, and a genuinely sporty sports saloon

3rd

Like a politically correct school sports day, they're all winners. A4 better to drive than ever before, spacious, clever and desirable

↑  
A genuine overtaking opportunity if – and only if – you're a thrusting 3-series M Sport pilot

## KEY TECH: JAGUAR XE InControl Apps



Get in the Jag and, rising gear selector aside, you'd be forgiven for wondering where the modernity was happening. But there is a bit of cutting edge tech hidden on page two of the infotainment system: InControl Apps. Plug in an appropriately apped-up smartphone and you get instant on-screen access to your contacts list, music and calendar, with the option to add extras such as Stitcher for podcasts and CitySeeker for comprehensive point of interest info. Sounds gimmicky, but works compellingly well.


in the hand you can almost feel the clay prototype; paddleshift levers that feel i8 expensive. The steering wheel's too fat of rim of course, but the system itself is sweet; direct, weighty and devoid of the corruption or numbness that are often bundled with four-wheel drive whether you want them or not.

The BMW's ride quality can't match the Jaguar's – on dull roads you find yourself prodding through the drive mode menu to Comfort, hoping the system's connected to the dampers. For £515 it can be, but even then they can't fully anaesthetise the fidgeting in the same way the system so effectively removes all signs of life from the powertrain. But the payoff is impressive body control and apparently unimpeachable poise under duress. If the BMW doesn't arc into corners with quite the same puppy-dog enthusiasm as the XE it's not far behind, and counters with an even more stoic refusal to roll. The 3-series simply rails around empty roundabouts and down challenging roads with all the speed and composure you could wish for, the essential balance afforded by the car's rear-drive platform working with xDrive to ensure at times quite astonishing speed without fuss. Is

a 3-series with driven front wheels blasphemy? Possibly, for a committed few, but for everyone else it's an impressively deft and unobtrusive all-wheel-drive system, one that gives much of the feel of a rear-drive chassis without the potential to find yourself pointing the wrong way. While absent on this Audi, experience suggests the A4's quattro set-up is similarly accomplished but in both cases feel free to save some money and dismiss them as superfluous.

Of course the A4's never been about charging around. But its new-found dynamic fluency adds another layer of gloss to its already lustrous desirability. The weight reduction, much of it from the steering and suspension systems, plus the latter's rigid five-link set-up have combined to finally breathe life into the Audi option. The A4 is a clever, nicely wrought and satisfyingly resolved product. Its approach to the turbodiesel problem is compelling. You're undoubtedly less prone to moan about binary throttle response and an uninspiring power delivery when the nav display feels like flying and the cabin's plush like something plucked from a considerably saltier price bracket. But still the Audi feels a little too cool and aloof, certainly in this company.

Not so the Jaguar. It's a mark of the car's ride and handling brilliance (and the engine's lack of refinement...) that nowhere does the four-pot turbodiesel feel less satisfying than here. But you will find yourself having too much fun to care, and to hell with some less-than-luxe interior plastics.

And the BMW? A painfully obvious winner perhaps but the weak areas in its game have been relentlessly weeded out and rectified. It's close, and the XE and A4 (not to mention Mercedes' unchanged but compelling C-class) scrutinise the 3's superiority like never before, but by blending the finer attributes of its rivals the BMW wins out. 



## Jaguar XE R-Sport 2.0 i4

**Price (as tested)** | £34,775 (£42,220)

**Engine**  
1999cc,  
16v, 4-cyl  
turbodiesel

**Transmission**  
Eight-speed  
auto, rear-wheel  
drive

**Suspension**  
Double  
wishbone front,  
multi-link rear



**Made of** aluminium

## BMW 320d xDrive

**Price (as tested)** | £33,585 (£46,240)

**Engine**  
1995cc,  
16v, 4-cyl  
turbodiesel

**Transmission**  
Eight-speed  
auto, four-  
wheel drive

**Suspension**  
Strut front,  
multi-link rear



**Made of** steel

## Audi A4 2.0 TDI S line

**Price (as tested)** | £33,345 (£40,230)

**Engine**  
1968cc,  
16v, 4-cyl  
turbodiesel

**Transmission**  
Seven-speed  
auto, front-  
wheel drive

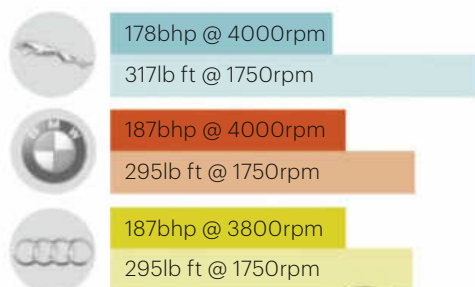
**Suspension**  
five-link front  
and rear



**Made of** aluminium and steel

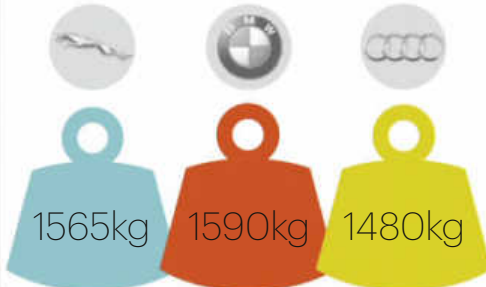
## Power & torque

**We say:** Audi feels the strongest – maybe Chapman was on to something?



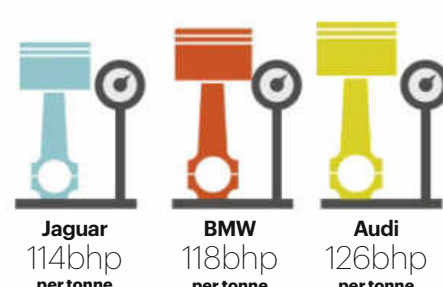
## Weight

**We say:** Strip out xDrive and the BMW weighs in at 1505kg



## Power-to-weight

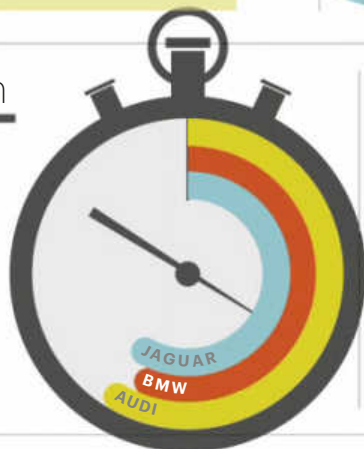
**We say:** Don't ruin everything with passengers



## 0-62mph

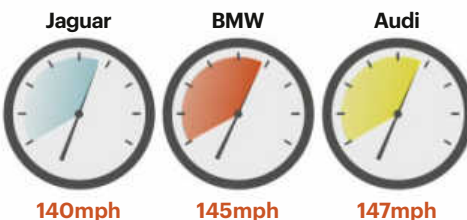
**We say:** Light, fit Audi loses out to four-wheel-drive 3-series

**Jaguar 7.8sec**  
**BMW 7.5sec**  
**Audi 7.7sec**



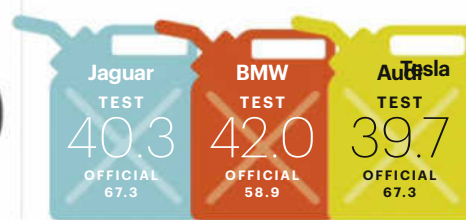
## Top speed

**We say:** Closely fought irrelevance contest



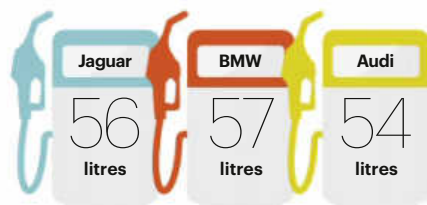
## Official & test mpg

**We say:** Mixed roads, mostly motorway – representative, then



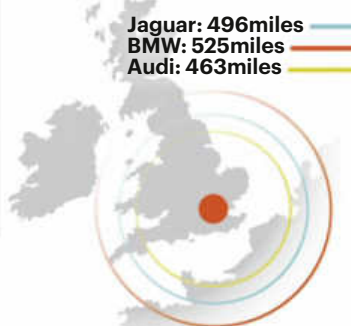
## Fuel tank

**We say:** 2.0-litre TDI A4s run a 40-litre tank as standard – 54 litres a no-cost option



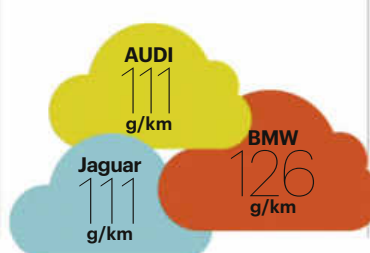
## Range

**We say:** Quattro bumps A4 to a 58-litre tank



## CO2

**We say:** Go quattro and the A4's CO2 output climbs to 118g/km



## Lease rates

**We say:** The best deals over 48 months, 10,000 miles per year





car INSIDE

# The world's greatest Bugatti collection

Engineered with an artist's eye, Bugatti's road and racing cars were the pinnacle of automotive design in the inter-war years – and most of them feature in Peter Mullin's extraordinary collection







← You can't have a Bugatti collection without an original Atlantic – fortunately Peter's has one. Ralph Lauren's got the other one

→ Honest 1934 Type 57 Ventoux a nice counterpoint to the big-money concours cars: 135bhp, 2100kg, 100mph and cable brakes...

Words Ben Miller Photography Robert Kerian





Opened in 2010, Mullin's museum isn't all cars – Bugatti artwork, sculptures, furniture and aeroplanes also feature



Type 35C is the archetypal Bugatti racer – 2-litre supercharged engine at one end, impossibly pretty tail at the other

**H**AS THERE EVER been a family quite like the Bugattis? Carlo, born in Milan in 1856, was a 19<sup>th</sup> century Leonardo Da Vinci, a multi-discipline virtuoso whose boundless imagination and creative fervour found form through hands of extraordinary skill. He designed and made fine furniture, he drew, he painted and he never stopped pushing himself. At 50 he became a silversmith against the advice of his peers, who pointed out that proficiency requires 30 years of practice. A year later Carlo was turning out award-winning pieces. Son Rembrandt's sculptures captured the natural world's wild beauty in incredible bronzes – lifeless cast metal given grace by his preternatural talent. And then there was Ettore, who understandably felt out-gunned at art school and strove instead, together with his son Jean, to blend art and engineering in the finest cars the world would know.

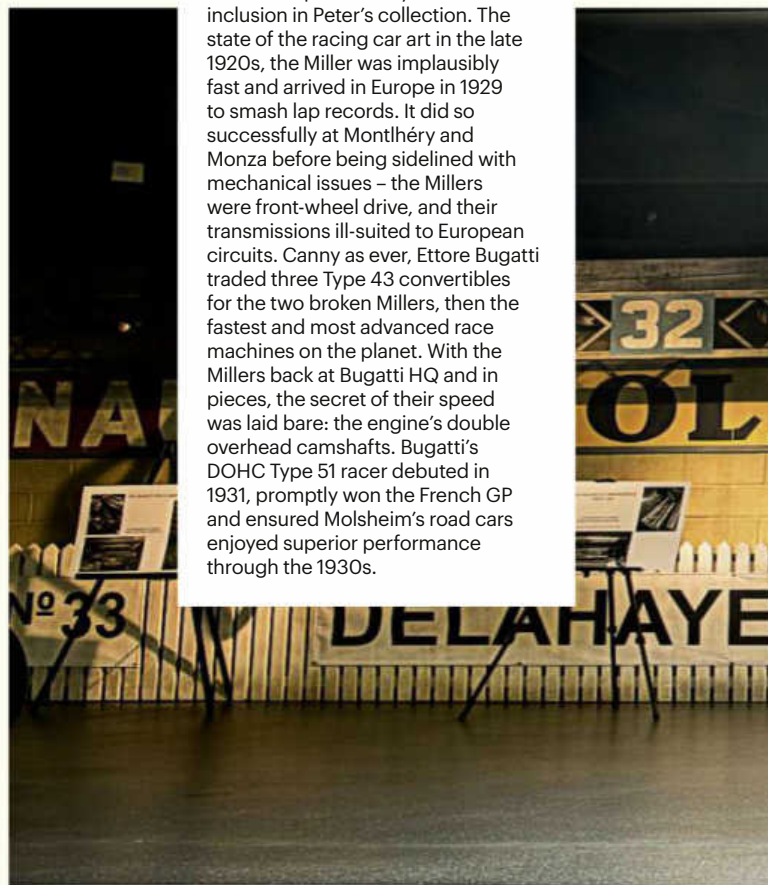
Ponder some of Bugatti's finest works – the diminutive but dominant Type 35 grand prix car, the otherworldly Atlantic, the monstrous train-engined Royale – and, given their rarity and worth, it's inconceivable that you might find an example of almost every car in Molsheim's back catalogue in one place. But in a vast steel and glass building in the Californian seaside town of Oxnard, American businessman Peter Mullin keeps arguably the greatest Bugatti collection in the world, the result of an extraordinary passion for the marque.

Wander inside, at once cursing your dream garage for a painful lack of ambition, and you're met first not by some wire-wheeled waif of a racer from antiquity but by the bluff, aggressive snout of an EB110, the Gandini-designed missing link between Bugatti in its original form and the VW-funded renaissance that sired Veyron.

'For me the EB110 is very much a true Bugatti,' says Mullin. 'Artioli's vision to continue the history of the marque in the 1990s with the EB110 was an important chapter in the Bugatti story. He built an extraordinary factory in which ▶

### AMERICAN GO-FASTER TECH

Patently not a Bugatti, this Miller Indy special is nevertheless a key car in the marque's history – hence its inclusion in Peter's collection. The state of the racing car art in the late 1920s, the Miller was implausibly fast and arrived in Europe in 1929 to smash lap records. It did so successfully at Montlhéry and Monza before being sidelined with mechanical issues – the Millers were front-wheel drive, and their transmissions ill-suited to European circuits. Canny as ever, Ettore Bugatti traded three Type 43 convertibles for the two broken Millers, then the fastest and most advanced race machines on the planet. With the Millers back at Bugatti HQ and in pieces, the secret of their speed was laid bare: the engine's double overhead camshafts. Bugatti's DOHC Type 51 racer debuted in 1931, promptly won the French GP and ensured Molsheim's road cars enjoyed superior performance through the 1930s.







**Wander inside and  
you'll immediately  
curse your dream  
garage for a painful  
lack of ambition**







to produce these cars and they were fast – the SS Le Mans was a 600bhp, 200mph car in 1995. I don't drive it often but every time I do I'm reminded that really fast Bugattis didn't start with the Veyron.'

Think Bugatti and you might think Veyron, but chances are it'll be followed moments later by a mental image of a small but perfectly formed racer in blue with a boat-like body and open wheels – a Type 35. Peter's is a 1925 Type 35C. It's driven regularly, on road and track. Conceived at Bugatti's Molsheim headquarters in 1923, the Type 35 started life as a sketched silhouette, an elegant teardrop Ettore and his engineers then brought to life. (A vast reproduction of that sketch adorns one wall of the current Bugatti assembly facility, the *atelier*). They did so with elegant design solutions that took existing practices and in most cases improved upon them, all the while clinging to the truth that, on a racing car, simple and light almost always win out.

The 35's neat suspension arrangement, in which the semi-elliptical springs pass through the axle rather than being U-bolted to it, would go on to become a Bugatti trademark. To reduce unsprung mass the front axle was also hollow – a simple idea fiendishly difficult to engineer. The wheels were striking eight-spoke pieces in cast aluminium, with integral brake drums for faster brake-shoe changes.

The result was a fast, beautiful, agile and – crucially – affordable racer, one that was loved by wealthy superstar drivers and the massed ranks of keen amateurs alike. Initially powered by a single overhead camshaft straight-eight, the early Type 35s were good for 90-100bhp and 115mph. Proudly naturally-aspirated in the face of ranks of supercharged competition (Ettore disliked forced induction, considering



it unfair – what would he have made of the Veyron's massed ranks of turbos?) the Type 35's speed stemmed from its strong brakes, fine handling and impressive reliability. Peter's car was originally a Type 35A, later restored and fitted with a supercharger (Ettore relented eventually...) to create a Type 35C. Pore over the little car and it's the details that captivate; the lock-out mechanism to prevent the gearbox jumping out of gear on rough roads; the gorgeous accelerator pedal that comprises nothing more than a single large roller bearing on an arm; the brass discs in rows down the side of the engine that you remove to access the valvegear for clearance checks.

'From a thousand or so races in the 1920s and 1930s Bugatti won 700,' explains Mullin. 'It's hard to think about Bugatti without thinking about the 35, and the Bs and Cs are certainly the best. The 35C's tremendous competition history makes that car special for me. We've had this car apart and what's amazing is that when you look at some of the engine internals – parts you'll never see – you notice a beautiful curve. Why do that, inside an engine where no one will see it? Because Ettore said his cars had to be as beautiful on the inside as on the outside, and the fact that other people couldn't see a part didn't make any difference – he knew it was there. I love that attitude – he insisted on elegance and excellence throughout. I was an art major in my early years and Bugatti's ►

#### THE \$40MILLION STAR

There are plenty of exceptional cars in the Mullin museum, but gaze upon the Atlantic, restored to its original specification between 2001 and 2003, and chances are everything else will drop into fuzzy insignificance. Impossibly pretty, the Atlantic's shape reflected a growing interest in the art of aerodynamics in 1930s European car making. The low-slung chassis dropped the centre of gravity and gave the impression the stunning body was barely clear of the road. The low-drag shape gave more speed for a given power output, not that the Atlantic was in any way lacking in poke – its high-compression supercharged straight-eight was good for 170bhp; in 1936!



It's about more  
than money –  
you could be  
ignorant of the  
Atlantic's value  
and still lose  
hours gazing  
at its form





It's not all wire wheels and ladder frames – the entrance to Bugatti obsessive Peter Mullin's dream garage houses his 1994 EB110 Supersport, complete with tiny horseshoe grille, scissor doors and quad-turbo V12

Deliberately sunk in Lake Maggiore following its confiscation by customs officers on the Swiss/Italian border in the 1920s, the tiny Type 22 racer passed into mythology when the chains securing the car in the shallows (its custodian had hoped to let the heat die down before salvaging the car from wet storage) gave way and the car slid to a depth of 173ft. It was discovered by a dive team in 1967, raised in July 2009 and bought in a Bonhams auction by Peter in 2010 for \$360,000, a figure well in excess of its original reserve of \$70,000-\$90,000. The bidding war represented a clash of ideologies – Peter wanted the car to remain as it is; his rival planned to restore it.

Heavily corroded, especially on the right-hand side – the left was buried in the silt and preserved – the car nevertheless bristles with intriguing details; the Bugatti logo on the suspension mounts for the quarter-elliptical rear springs, the myriad layers of paint on the body where this hard-working racer was endlessly re-painted, and mechanical rev counter drive still running from the engine back to the time-ravaged dashboard. Incidentally, a complete, restored Type 22 Brescia can be found on a mezzanine, where two rows of 1920s racers sit looking so elegant you wish racing car engineering had never discovered downforce and wings.

Fascinating though the corroded Brescia is, the star of the museum's collection has a magnetic draw. The Type 57SC Atlantic's sheer beauty and affecting physical presence are almost unsettling – the car steals the breath from your lungs and drags your gaze to it. It's hugely valuable, certainly, but there's more to the Atlantic than that – you could be ignorant of its worth and still lose hours gazing at its form. Perhaps it's simply that the Type 57SC might be the most beautiful car ever built. ▶

## 'An interest became a passion, then an obsession'

Meet Peter Mullin

**BEING SUCCESSFUL** in the business of life insurance and annuity has allowed Peter Mullin to indulge a passion for some of the world's most valuable classic cars. But just five minutes in his company is enough to convince you Peter's no cold-hearted collector; his passion for Bugattis is genuine and all consuming.

'35 years ago I became entranced with French cars; Delahayes, Delages, Talbot-Lagos,' explains Mullin. 'It started when a neighbour asked if he could have his car photographed outside my house for a magazine. I couldn't get the image of this car out of my head, its combination of sculptural design and fine engineering, so I bought one.'

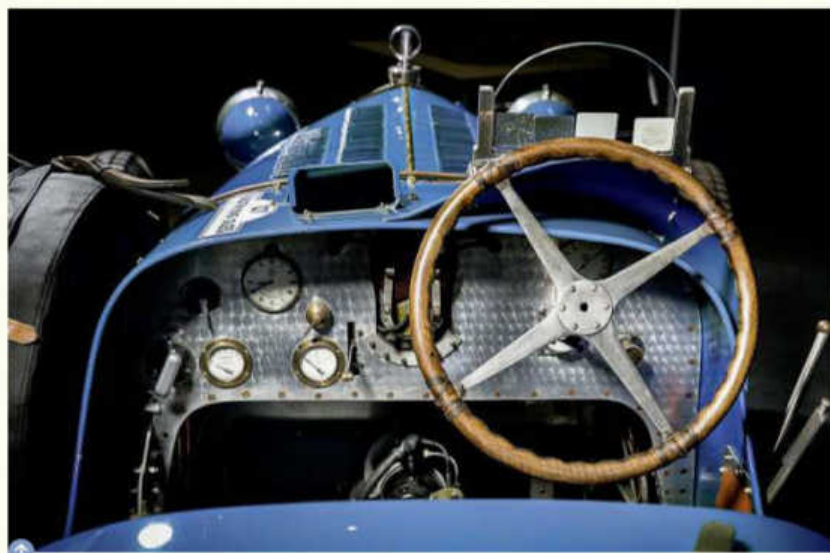
'My first Bugatti was a late 1920s Type 37A racer – this was probably 25 years ago – and in the process I learned about the marque's history, then its all-conquering race success and the fantastic designs Jean created. The passion leads to an interest, the interest prompts you to read and to learn, and in turn the study compounds the passion – it's kind of an ever-increasing spiral upward. And if you have a Type 37A then you need a Type 35, and then a supercharged 35C, then a 51... and then you're hooked.'

thinking spoke to me, in terms of the soul of the man and the way he thought about what he did. I didn't really appreciate his racing cars' form until I compared them to their contemporaries. When you do that you see that the other GP cars' proportions were a little wrong. On the 35 the tail is exactly the right length from the cockpit and it comes to a perfect tapered point, the culmination of curves that start right at the other end of the car, at the radiator grille.'

From the sublime to the ridiculous: the Type 41 Royale. A leviathan at more than 3 tonnes, the 21ft-long super-saloon was powered by a 300bhp 12.7-litre straight-eight engine and conceived, quite simply, to eclipse Rolls-Royce and become the best car in the world. Ettore's timing couldn't have been worse, with the car going on sale just as the Wall Street crash and the Great Depression meant even royalty couldn't afford the Royale. Six were built, three sold and several unused engines went into French rail locomotives...

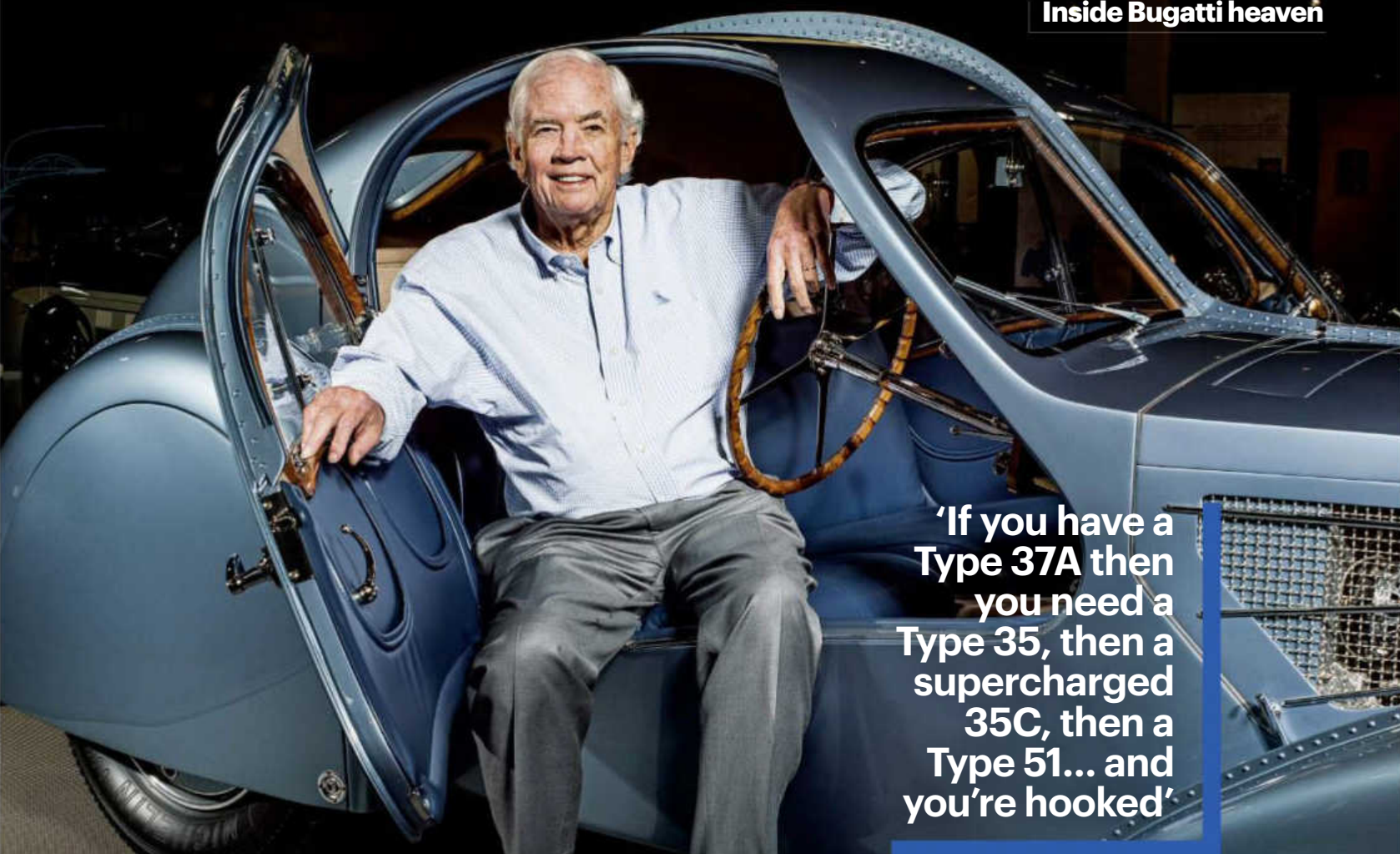
The Royale in Peter's collection is on loan from Europe, a temporary monolith among his lithe sports racers. 'You certainly can't be neutral to the Royale,' laughs Mullin. 'It's massive. Stand next to it and the tops of the doors are level with your shoulder. It was built for the heads of state, royals and the great families of Europe, but while it's an incredible piece of engineering it's not the kind of thing you take out on a Sunday drive. Once again Ettore got the proportions right though – the Royale's larger than life but visually it works.'

The Mullin museum's Oxnard facilities are open to the public; the cars on display like an art gallery with lighting, information boards and guided tours. One of the most intriguing displays is of a Type 22 racer in a fairly advanced state of decomposition. With much of it missing and the rest largely rendered in iron oxide, it doesn't look much. Amazing then to discover that it cost Peter nearly \$400,000.



Mechanic sat on the left in the Type 35, pumping oil, venting the fuel tank, watching the clocks and screaming





'If you have a Type 37A then you need a Type 35, then a supercharged 35C, then a Type 51... and you're hooked'

#### MRS MULLIN'S FAVOURITE

The Type 46 was an 'affordable' tourer, and Bugatti's response to the economic crash of the late 1920s. Before Peter bought it in 2001 and restored it, this car lived in Paris, Greece and America. The colours were picked by Peter's wife Merle, who also chose the trim inside to match her favourite Bottega Veneta handbag.







Floating body is a proposal by California's Art Center College of Design for a successor to the Atlantic

## 'I'm a little biased but for me the Atlantic is the Mona Lisa of the automobile world'

original 57SC Atlantics in the world – but more than that they're the epitome of sculptural engineering. There's real beauty to the riveted metal roofline and fenders but there's functionality there too. They were used because originally the car that inspired the seams, the Aerolithe coupe, was to be bodied in duralumin magnesium, which you couldn't weld, so they were going to rivet the panels together. In the end the Atlantics weren't made of magnesium but the seams and the rivets added flair to the design.'


As quick as it is beautiful, the Atlantic uses a 170bhp iteration of the eight-cylinder (the five exhausts are pure whimsy) double-overhead-camshaft Type 55 engine in a chassis clothed in a body by Jean Bugatti, Ettore's son. Originally sold to Lord Victor Rothschild, who had the factory fit a supercharger from a Type 55 engine, this car – chassis number 57374 – was rebuilt at Molsheim to correct SC specification in the 1950s, at the behest of its then owner, before being sold at auction in 1971 for \$59,000. It was sold again in 2010 for \$34million.

'I don't think anyone can look at this car and not be moved by it,' continues Mullin. 'From my point of view this car is the apex not only of Bugatti design but maybe of French car design period. Best angle? The rear three-quarter. You see the curve of the roofline, then you see the rear fenders curling around the bottom of the car and back up the other side. That, together with the teardrop roof shape, is about as exquisite as it gets. We're very fortunate to have it here in the museum.'

Standing among these cars in hushed awe, you

can't help thinking that they must be more spectacular still in motion: at speed in the California sunshine, narrow tyres running fast on hot concrete, mighty old supercharged engine roaring as the slender throttle pedal sinks to the floor. I can only dream: Peter knows. 'Oh sure, we take them all out pretty regularly – cars are for being driven.'

Some of the museum's cars are raced, others driven hard on extended road runs. Take Peter's beloved 1932 Type 55 Super Sport. 'In terms of sports racers the Type 55 is as good as it gets – I wanted one of these for 30 years,' he says. 'I finally found one and it was rare and exceptional: original Jean Bugatti body, chassis and engine. This one is particularly well sorted out. I use it pretty extensively on international events. I took it on a rally in Scotland a couple of years ago, last year it was in New Zealand, and I'll be taking it out again this year. It'll do 200 miles a day for a week, no problem. It's a joy to drive – essentially they took the supercharged Type 51 racing engine, the ultimate, and put that engine in the 55 – I love this car.' If I had to pick one car, it'd be this one.'

Praise indeed considering the company it keeps. 

Thanks to the Mullin automotive museum, Oxnard, California – [mullinautomotivemuseum.com](http://mullinautomotivemuseum.com)



 Type 57C Aravis was owned by Bugatti factory driver Maurice Trintignant. He sold the car in 1947, planning to replace it with a newer Bugatti, but none was forthcoming – by then Molsheim's glory years were behind it



# MODERN CLASSICS

DRIVING, BUYING & ENJOYING HERO CARS OF THE '80s, '90s & '00s



Great cars, brilliant drives and expert buying tips. *Modern Classics* is the brand new magazine for fans who love hero cars from the '80s, '90s & '00s.

**MODERN CLASSICS**

**ON SALE NOW!**

In WH Smith and all good newsagents or online at [www.greatmagazines.co.uk/modernclassics](http://www.greatmagazines.co.uk/modernclassics)





A high-action photograph of two sports cars, a silver Porsche 911 and a lime green McLaren 570S, racing on a wet, dark asphalt road. The cars are angled towards the viewer, with motion blur in the background suggesting high speed. The Porsche is on the left, and the McLaren is on the right. The road surface is wet, reflecting light. The background consists of blurred green foliage and trees, indicating a forest or park setting.

# Ron's force awakens

**Sports Car Wars returns for an exciting new chapter,  
in which fledgling McLaren takes on the might of the  
invincible Porsche empire. 570S vs 911: battle is joined**

Words Chris Chilton Photography John Wycherley







**ESTORIL CIRCUIT**, Portugal. Today they meet as rivals, McLaren and Porsche, 570S and 911 Turbo. Britain's newest sports car and Germany's longest lived, prowling through the sopping wet paddock of a storied circuit once a mainstay of the Grand Prix calendar, now a mere footnote in its history. But almost exactly 31 years ago on this very tarmac, it was a different story. A story about the collective might of German and British motorsport brains working together to produce a car that decimated the opposition. A story about the closest F1 championship in the history of the sport.

By October 1984, and the last race of the year, McLaren's Porsche-engined MP2/3 had dominated the season, the constructor's championship already firmly in the bag following a 1-2 win at Zandvoort three rounds earlier. But the real excitement was in the drivers' championship. Veteran champion Niki Lauda, lured out of retirement by McLaren for the 1982 season but so far unable to claim his third drivers' title, was paired with rising French star Alain Prost, chomping at the bit to get his first.

There's an analogy in there somewhere. Although it's four years since McLaren Automotive launched its first car, and the quality, ability and capacity of those cars to thrill has improved with every year, this is still a young company. Like Prost in '84, it's still learning, and it's still looking for its first decisive comparison test victory in this magazine.

Porsche meanwhile, the wise old man of sports cars, has been making 911s for 52 years; Turbos for over 40. Straddling the line between pure sports cars and laid-back GTs, the 911 isn't merely a great backroad scratcher, it's an everyday proposition with space for junk, visibility and reliability. Little wonder it's the default choice, and was always the car in the 570 development team's crosshairs.

'We had 911s in the studio during the process to make sure our car was at least as good,' McLaren's design chief, Frank Stephenson had told me earlier. 'The idea was to make it do everything the 911 can do but better. It's almost like we started from the inside out. We looked at visibility, comfort, storage capabilities, everything like that had to be the first priority. When you look at the pyramid, the base was usability.'

Over the next couple of days we'll be putting that to the test, piling on motorway miles, slicing through city traffic and carving up some fast open roads up and down the length of Portugal.

And since these aren't fair-weather sports cars we'll be taking in all sorts of weather conditions, from torrential rain to even torrential rain.

That we'd be bringing a 911 to the Faro launch was a given. But which 911? A Top-Trumps-style investigation reveals the Turbo S to be as bang on the money as it is on the power, which is why CAR's James Taylor is on his way from the UK in one as we make our way north from Faro in the McLaren. Bringing an extra 39bhp to the table for a £21,522 premium over its ►



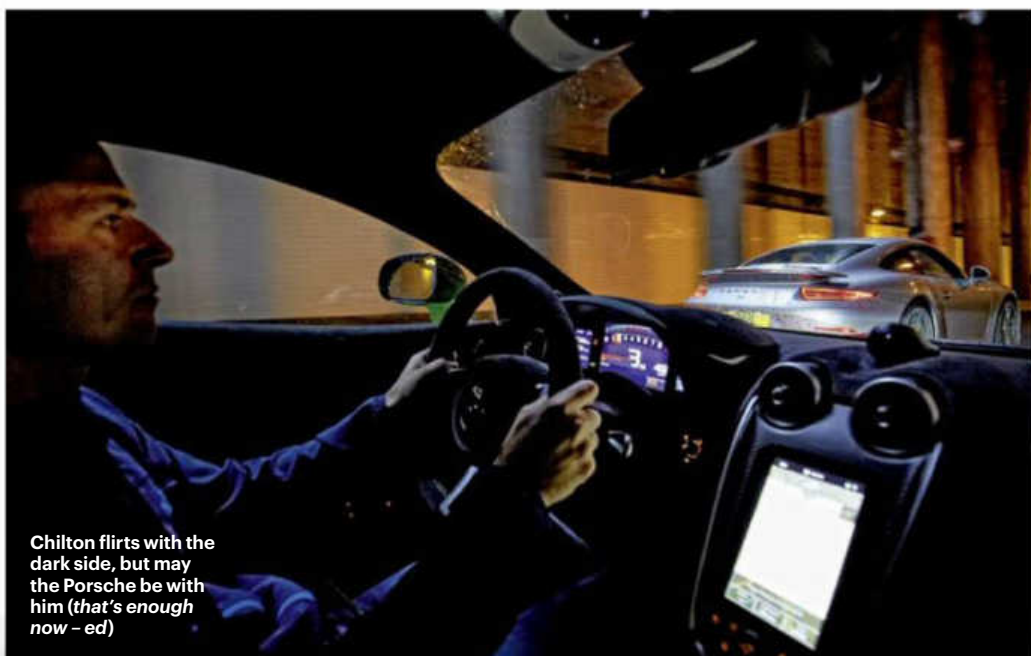
Our man Chilton at Estoril (top), a place rich with racing heritage. Most of his time was spent in the filling station, however



**'We had 911s in the studio during the process to make sure our car was at least as good'**



Back in 1984 Porsche and McLaren were here, working together to conquer F1. Now they're on opposite sides



Chilton flirts with the dark side, but may the Porsche be with him (that's enough now - ed)







McLaren's slightly softer styling allegedly targets women customers. Get one for the wife?



non-S brother, the 911 Turbo S costs £142,120 and delivers 552bhp. McLaren's 570S (there's also a 540C for £126k from spring 2016) makes 562bhp and will set you back £143,250. Not much in that, you'll agree, and though the Porsche's flat-six gives its four driveshafts a 553lb ft Chinese burn, and the McLaren inflicts a comparatively limp-wristed 443lb ft attack on its two, the corpulent German weighs in at 1680kg, or 250kg more than the Brit.

On-paper figures put the Porsche a tenth ahead to 62mph, at 3.1sec, but its 198mph top speed falls 6mph short. That's close enough to be inconsequential, but my shove-in-the-back-o-meter is telling me that the McLaren is a decisively more savage accelerator. Not quite as savage as the 641bhp 650S, but quick enough to press me deep into the bucket seat when the blowers start boosting. It likes to rev too, pulling to 8500rpm, long after the 911 has given up. Later, a more thorough dig through the 570 technical info turns up 0-124mph figures that bear this out. Porsche: 10.3sec, McLaren: 9.5sec. Lamborghini's £180k Huracan, by the way, needs 9.9...

The leveller today though is the weather. That and the Porsche's four-wheel-drive system. As we cruise down the sopping wet IC15 heading for Lisbon, Portugal's shabby chic capital, I radio James telling him to pull alongside for a rolling drag race. When the hammers drop, so does the 570S, by a couple of car lengths as the all-wheel-drive Porsche storms ahead leaving the McLaren struggling for purchase on the slimy bitumen.

Four-wheel drive is but one of the ways these cars differ from one another. Under dramatically disparate skins they're every bit as different as they look, a shared 3.8-litre capacity and use of twin turbochargers about the only common connections. A two-plus-two with its engine slung unfashionably far beyond the rear axle, the 911 is constructed around an aluminium-intensive steel structure. A pumped up version of the regular 991, it looks too similar at the front, but the way the rear tyres tuck into those huge arches is exquisite. Swollen? Blistered? Anaphylactic shock, more like.

But even a booty like that isn't enough to garner it much attention as we pick our way through streets that mix tiled facades like a 1970s kitchen, and peeling paint. All eyes are on the McLaren. I doubt most of those eyes know this is the

baby McLaren, and many probably don't know what it is at all. They almost certainly won't know that it's built around a carbonfibre chassis tub and flat-plane-crank V8 that can trace its parentage to the mighty P1 hypercar. They might have noticed that the softer rear end styling, with its wraparound superformed aluminium panels and coquettish lamps, seems surprisingly non-threatening – a deliberate attempt to target female customers. But all they really know, or think they do,



They banged on the window begging us to rev it. Fair enough, right now it's worth more than Portugal



The chassis tub's made of carbonfibre too. 570S is 250kg lighter than 911

is that the green car, with its Ferrari-esque styling, its better-than-Ferrari dihedral doors and its growly engine, is both faster and significantly more expensive. Only we know that they cost almost exactly the same (or *do* they? see panel, left).

Looking like a million dollars when you've only spent two-fifty has undeniable appeal, but driving cars like the 570 in town has its problems, particularly in a country so deprived of tasty metal as Portugal. Thumbs-ups and camera phones I can live with, but when you've got people banging on the window like you're some kind of scab breaking through a picket line, demanding you blip the throttle in traffic, you start to wonder whether the 911's seat isn't the more appealing.

And that's no reflection on the strides McLaren has made to deliver on its usability promise. The carbon tub's vastly lower sill compared with that in the 650S, together with a more generous door swing means it's far easier to get in and out of than its sibling. Not easy, but easier. The visibility is generous too, both ahead, to the side and through the letterbox rear window, though the front wing peaks aren't as obvious as in its big brother, making it harder to place on the road, whether you're carving through the countryside or dodging Lisbon's ancient trams.

The relationship between seat, wheel and pedals is perfect though, the new digital instrument display clear, and now featuring turn-by-turn navigation instructions to supplement the main map display in the tunnel. The new physical shortcut buttons to functions accessed via that central Iris infotainment screen are welcome, as is the shift in the RND gearchange buttons, which have been moved sufficiently forward in the tunnel that you no longer need to operate them with your elbow. It's tangibly less spacey in here than something like a Ferrari 488, but that also contributes to a wieldy feel when threading through the city. And in relative terms, it's not cramped. In fact, bizarrely, it's bigger than the costlier 650S both inside and out. Headroom is good, and while it doesn't have 911's rear-seat-cum luggage dump, the front boot is large and there's a generous shelf behind the seats for more squashy bags.

Like the Turbo S, the 570 comes only with a seven-speed dual-clutch transmission, which takes some of the sting out of Lisbon's stop/start traffic. But the pedal effort required to clamp the McLaren's standard carbon discs sufficiently hard to keep the transmission creep at bay is annoyingly high considering its intended use. Imagine riding a bike with only a right pedal attached to the crank and you've probably got a good approximation of what it'll feel like in LA traffic. ▶

Ancient Lisbon greeted 570S as if Marty McFly was driving it. 911 hardly registered

## You can afford it! How to get a 570S for £995pm

When McLaren heard we were bringing a 911 Turbo there were some raised eyebrows. They'd figured a Carrera S a more natural foe, even though it's massively down on price, power and performance. McLaren says big league supercars, cars like the P1, are bought with cash, but at 570 level, it's all on finance. The cost of that finance is based on the car's depreciation, and because the 570S is predicted to hold on to such a big chunk of its value after three years, McLaren

has come up with a pretty enticing PCP package. Okay, so to us mere mortals the numbers are still eye-watering – you drop £39k as a deposit, then pay £995 a month for three years before deciding whether to walk away, or stump up a £90k balloon payment. But a visit to broker4cars.co.uk looking for a Turbo S with the same deposit and same 10,000pa mileage limit, results in a bill for £1736pm, albeit with a smaller balloon (merely hot air, rather than Zeppelin-sized).



## McLaren 570S vs Porsche 911 Turbo S



Both answer to the name 'wieldy', but both suffer from the turbo lag Ferrari's 488 seems to have dialled out



Super-tech cabin not only looks ace but works. 650S's flawed tunnel-switch layout greatly improved



## 570S vs 650S What's the difference?

### BODY & AERO

The 570S ditches the 650's composite body panels for more easily repaired superformed aluminium panels that are heated then blown into a mould. Only the 650S gets active aero in the form of a moveable rear spoiler

### CHASSIS

Both use a variation of the carbonfibre MonoCell, but the 570S's is modified with a lowered sill for easier access. Maintaining stiffness at the same time meant adding 5kg of strengthening material to junior's tub (still only 80kg)

### ENGINE

Every McLaren from 570S to P1 employs a version of the original 12C's 3.8-litre twin-turbo V8. The 570S makes 562bhp and 443lb ft to the 650S's 641bhp and 500lb ft. Both are rear-drive via a seven-speed twin-clutch 'box

### SUSPENSION

With its uncanny ability to absorb bumps, hydraulic suspension has always been a key modern McLaren feature. But the 570S uses conventional suspension and anti-roll bars. So no risk of leaks, but more bumps.



**Flick your wrist in either direction and the 570 reminds that it's lighter than any rival**

Other small niggles include noisy windscreen wipers, a whistling from the air-con that sounds like someone tapping out *War and Peace* in morse code, and a badly positioned brake cooling duct that hangs way below the front wishbones where it's just begging to be destroyed by potholes and kerbs. I obliged. In McLaren's defence it claims to be aware of these problems on what was a pre-production car and assures us they'll be fixed before customers take delivery. We'll see.

After a pause for pictures I switch to the 911, and it feels like I've jumped into a Cayenne by mistake. Taller by 94mm, and (subjectively, if not objectively) significantly wider, it's instantly less alien. It's a handsome interior, but the great swathe of buttons below the gear selector is fussy, the column stalks feel as flimsy as they have for decades, and it's surprising to find that there are fewer useful cubbies for phones, wallets and coffees than in the McLaren, or at least located in the centre console where you really want them. And the comforting familiarity of the design and materials is also its downfall. It doesn't feel that much more special to look at and sit in than a Cayman costing a third as much.

Porsche fans have heard it all before. Drivers, they'll counter, are less interested in vanity than profanity – the kind of expletives that might escape your mouth every time you hit a great bit of road, ask the Turbo to dig deep, and are reminded how great this chassis and engine combination really is. So the following morning we're briefly back on the motorway, to find us some of those finding-out roads. Despite James Taylor complaining of a numb arse on the way down through Spain, the 911 feels comfortable and composed at a cruise, its boxer six humming away unobtrusively in the background, occasionally cutting in and out as it makes use of the coasting function that helps Porsche claim an impressive 29.4mpg and 227g/km. Despite packing McLaren's first stop/start system, the lighter 570 trails on 25.4mpg and 258g/km. Refined at UK speeds, above 100mph it's noticeably more boomy too, something to bear in mind if you're an autobahn-dwelling McLar-hun.

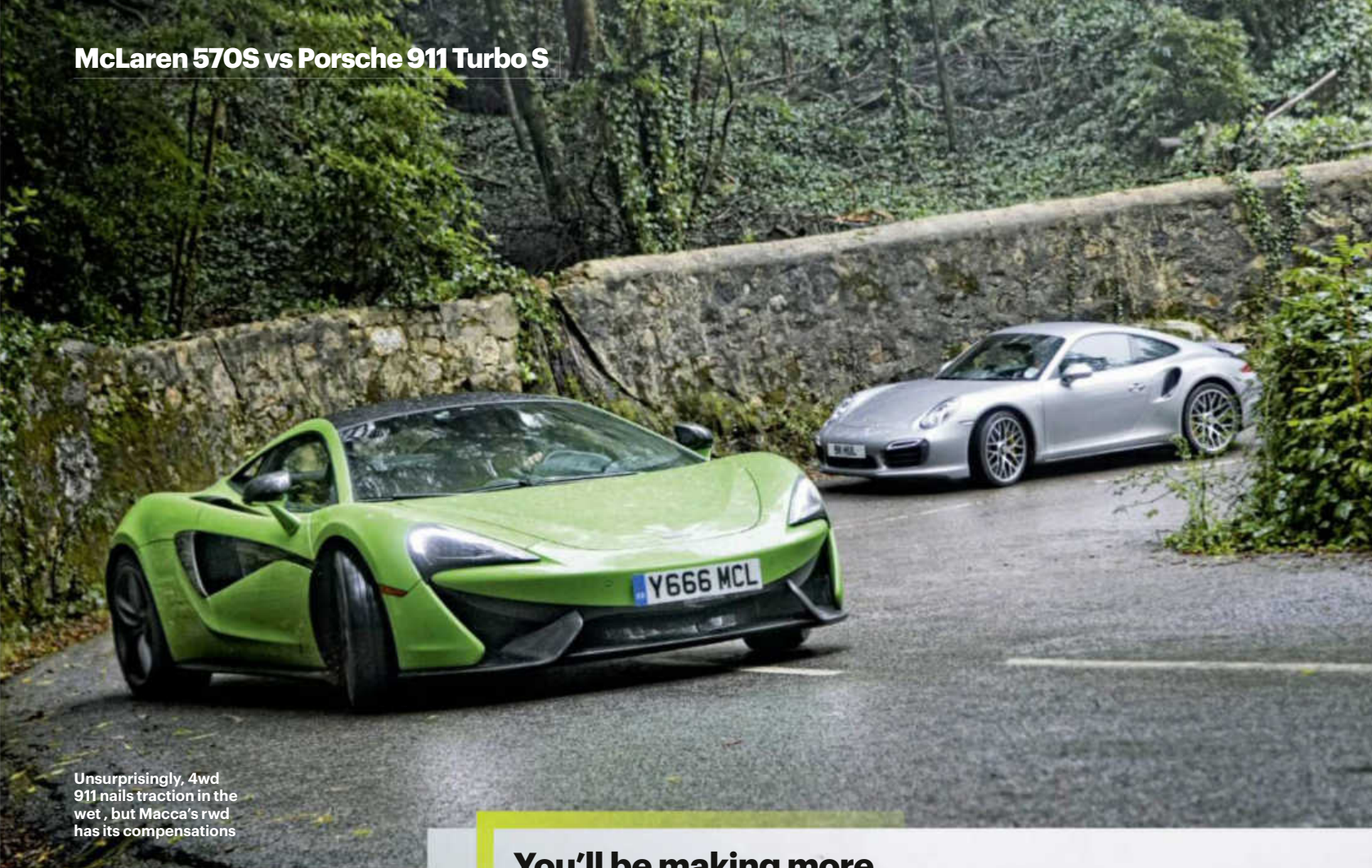
As grey turns to green, the urban sprawl thinning and eventually giving way to the woody climbs of the *Sintra-Cascais* National Park, each car grabs the increasingly frequent chances to stretch its legs. I've driven the 911 Turbo S before, but I'm no less shocked by how wieldy it feels. Some of that precision must be down to adaptive engine mounts specific to the S, which also gets half an inch wider centre-lock wheels. But for me the four-wheel-steer system that's common to both Turbos is where this blown 911 stepped up a gear from its predecessors. In town you can see the rear wheel twisting outwards in your side mirror ▶



Too many buttons, cheap column stalks... not a £120k cabin. Familiarity breeds contempt?



## McLaren 570S vs Porsche 911 Turbo S



Unsurprisingly, 4wd 911 nails traction in the wet, but Macca's rwd has its compensations



↑  
Forgot to bring your iPad? Not a problem – borrow Ron's

→  
We know 911 is kind of timeless, and maybe the 570S will date, but right now there's only one event car here

**You'll be making more allowances for the McLaren. Pure sports cars will always ask that**





to improve manoeuvrability when parking. Up here in the hills you can feel it pointing the car into each corner, imbuing it with an almost mid-engined zeal for changing direction. Slow in/fast out has always been the 911 mantra, but that goes out the window with torque-vectoring four-wheel-steer agility and four-wheel-drive traction doing their best buddy movie impression. Fast in, faster in the middle and utterly batsh\*t on the exit is the new party line.

The standard ceramics give a beautifully firm pedal feel and the PDK 'box's shift mapping is excellent, but it's not all good news. The steering feels disappointingly ill-defined around the straight ahead, the throttle response is utterly soporific unless you've got the Sport button engaged, and even then the flat-six makes you wait before delivering.

The McLaren feels similarly less than immediate when you summon the power, a combination of turbo lag and peak torque not arriving until 5000rpm. The pedal response is actually pretty good, but sometimes that first modest slug of extra power

only serves to push the nose wide, because it's not the giant kick of thrust you wanted to help the car move around its centreline. It gives the 570 an occasionally soft, imprecise feel until you learn to work with its particular traits, to ensure you're in the right gear and getting on the gas at the right time.

For me, Ferrari's 488 GTB and its near zero-lag response has changed the turbocharged game, and both McLaren and Porsche are playing catch up (though I haven't driven the 991.2). But when it comes to steering, it's McLaren that leads the class. The weight of the steering, the outstanding on-centre feel, the perfectly judged ratio, even just the shape of the wheel, all contribute to a car that is a joy to drive at any speed in any situation. Whether you're ambling down a motorway or tearing up B-roads, you never feel less than 100% keyed in, and that's a rare thing these days, even in this class.

Flick your wrist in either direction and the 570 reminds that it's lighter than any rival. Reverting to cheaper, lighter, steel springs and anti-roll bars instead of the 650's hydraulics has had a slightly detrimental effect on ride quality that's particularly noticeable on Lisbon's cobbles, but it's still comfortable, and the control remains intact, giving you the confidence to push deeper and deeper. Though dimensionally bigger than a 650S, you'd swear from the way it moves that the 570 takes up less road real estate. As James says, it feels like the kind of car Lotus would love the Evora 400 to be, given the chance.

McLaren's twin toggles, one for handling, one for power, make another appearance at the base of the console giving a choice of Normal, Sport and Track in each case. Track's damping is too tight for these roads, but Sport works perfectly, and following the 675LT's lead, the ESP system is decoupled from those toggles. So if you do want Track mode's body control and throttle response, you can now have it while enjoying the ESP safety net. Not that most drivers will need it. Natural balance and a generous steering lock mean the physical hardware is on your side.

There were no electronic safety nets in Prost and Lauda's car back in '84 of course. No paddleshift transmissions either,



Chris calls the rear lamps 'coquettish'. Would grace the Tate Modern, and will grace the road

although the MP4/2 was one of the first F1 cars to employ carbon ceramic brakes. We swing by Estoril one last time before Porsche and McLaren go their separate ways. It's still tipping it down, but 31 years ago the umbrellas offered shelter from the sun, not the rain. Going in to that final race Prost was second in the driver's championship but knew he would seal the deal if he finished in the top three, as long as table-topper Lauda trailed by several places. Lauda meanwhile could wrap it up if he came first or second. Trouble was, Prost had qualified on the front row, while his teammate lay back in 11th. But this was Niki Lauda we're talking about. A man who, eight years earlier had lost his eyelids, most of his ear and almost his life in a Nordschleife fireball but was back on the starting grid just six weeks later. Lauda battled through the field at Estoril, taking advantage of Nigel Mansell's 51st-lap spin to take second place to Prost's first, and the championship by half a point – half points having been awarded earlier in the season when Monaco was stopped mid-race with Prost in the lead.

The two remained teammates the following season, one that culminated in the Austrian's retirement from racing, and the first of the Frenchman's three world championships. Porsche continued to supply powertrains to McLaren for three further years but they were no match for the Williams-Hondas and McLaren itself switched to Japanese power for 1988. As for Estoril, it hosted a Portugal Grand Prix until 1996, thereafter being dumped from the calendar. The fabulous *Autodromo Algarve* circuit at Portimao has long been mooted as the right facility to return a GP to Portugal, but there's one big piece of the puzzle missing: cash. Portugal is still pretty skint.

McLaren Automotive, on the other hand, is in rude health. In profit and in a position to funnel millions of pounds back into research and development for its next generation of cars, McLaren's road-car arm feels like a company that has really found its feet, found its identity, and grown in confidence. The brilliant 675LT is evidence of that. So is the 570S. But is the 570S good enough to make a better buy than a 911? This might be the most usable McLaren yet, but it still can't match the Porsche when it comes to ease of use. The 911 is roomier, easier to see out of and requires less effort to drive and own. When I tot up the Porsche's demerits, the list, as ever, is short.

You'll be making more allowances for the McLaren. Pure sports cars will always ask that of you. But you really could imagine using a 570S every day, and the 50% cheaper PCP deal will be tempting for many. I say many, but while McLaren expects the 570, its de-contented 540 little brother, and the inevitable roofless version that'll follow, to double Woking's output, we're still talking a couple of thousand cars per year to the 911's 30,000. That rarity alone ensures the McLaren feels like the more special car. But so does the way it drives, and that must be the deciding character in a test like this. It steers so much better, accelerates that bit harder. It just puts a bigger grin on your face more of the time, and makes the Porsche feel, well, a little bit ordinary. And I don't believe I've ever written that before. 📧

📧@chrischiltoncar

#### PORSCHE 911 TURBO S

**Price** £142,120

**Engine** 3800cc 24v flat 6cyl, 552bhp @ 6500rpm, 553lb ft @ 2200rpm

#### **Transmission**

7-speed dual-clutch, four-wheel drive  
**Performance** 3.1sec 0-62mph, 198mph, 29.1mpg, 227g/km CO2

#### **Suspension**

McPherson struts front, multi-link rear, adaptive dampers

#### **Length/**

#### **width/height**

4506/1978/1296mm

#### **Weight/made**

from 1680kg/steel, aluminium

**Fuel tank** 68 litres

**Rating** ★★★★★

#### McLAREN 570S

**Price** £143,250

**Engine** 3799cc 32v V8, 562bhp @ 7400rpm, 443lb ft @ 5000rpm

#### **Transmission**

7-speed dual-clutch, rear-wheel drive  
**Performance** 3.2sec 0-62mph, 204mph, 25.4mpg, 258g/km CO2

#### **Suspension**

double wishbones, coil springs, adaptive dampers

#### **Length/**

#### **width/height**

4530/2095/1202mm

#### **Weight/made from**

1430kg/carbonfibre, aluminium

**Fuel tank** 72 litres

**Rating** ★★★★★





# ICON BUYER.

Serious used car temptation, from super-spiders to choosing a mega Bentley

NEW vs USED

## New Jaguar F-type V6 vs used Audi R8

That £72k you've got tucked away buys you a brand-new Jag, but it would also snaffle a three-year-old supercar, with Audi reliability. Let's sense-check that...

Words Ben Barry | Photography Mark Riccioni



Usually we talk about reliability as a big concern, but here the used car is an *Audi*. And the new car is a Jag. Role reversal?





**Y**OU'VE GOT £70K to spend, and must-haves include open-air motoring, sports-car style and all-wheel-drive security. What to buy? Jaguar suggests its new F-type V6 S. Previously a frisky rear-driver, the convertible is now available with all-wheel drive, keeping entertainment high while inducing fewer yelps.

But for the £72k Jaguar asks, you can propel yourself into entry-level supercar territory with a secondhand Audi R8 V8 Spyder. The Spyder debuted in 2010 with V10 power, the V8 following in 2011, and the very earliest are yours for £60k-plus. Spend F-type money and you'll get 2012-plate models with around 20,000 miles.

You sit down low in the Audi, the bonnet dropping dramatically for a great view of the road and a reminder that 4.2 litres are mounted behind your head. Great V8, too. The naturally aspirated lump might be shared with Labrador-lugging RS4s, but its linear, free-revving response and hard-edged soundtrack are right at home here.

Choose from manual or semi-auto transmissions, but remember Audi offered two semi-autos: first R-Tronic, then S-Tronic from 2013. R-Tronic, a clutchless manual, is ponderous, where S-Tronic is a sharper dual-clutcher; spot the later cars by their LED headlights and 'dynamic' turn indicators that sweep over the light cluster. If you're looking at the earliest models, go for a manual; the open-gate six-speeder's tactile changes make up for the tenths you lose.

Our R8 gets the optional magnetic ride suspension, which fidgets over urban imperfections, but improves with speed. And that's where the magic happens. Nibble at the limits and you'll feel the gentle push of understeer, but the R8 will play if you're more aggressive, especially on track; strangely, the R8 is far more

rear-biased than the Lamborghini Gallardo it's based on.

The comfortable seats are positioned noticeably higher in the F-type, its slightly numb steering delivering less feedback than the Audi, the low-speed ride plusher. It might be down two cylinders, and positioned out front, but the supercharged 3.0-litre V6 pops and crackles wickedly, responds to throttle commands like a kid touching an electric fence, and sings with a beguilingly mournful warble when you're pootling.

The suspension feels softer than the F-type coupe, so there's more roll and a less precise feeling, but it can still entertain. The roll allows you to play with the chassis, and when you do you notice how rear-biased it is: it'll let the rear slip enough for the revs to flare, before switching more oomph to the front to curb your exuberance.

The manual gearbox available on rear-drive F-types isn't offered here, but don't fret: the convertible's eight-speed ▶

## Jaguar vs Audi: the numbers

### JAGUAR F-TYPE V6 S AWD CONVERTIBLE

- > **Price** £72,390
- > **Engine** 2995cc 24v V6 supercharged, 375bhp @ 6500rpm, 339lb ft @ 3500rpm
- > **Transmission** Eight-speed automatic, all-wheel drive
- > **Performance** 5.1sec 0-62mph, 171mph, 31.7mpg, 211g/km CO2
- > **Suspension** Double-wishbone front, multi-link rear
- > **Weight/made from** 1694kg/aluminium
- > **Length/width/height** 4470/1923/1308mm
- > **On sale** Now

### AUDI R8 V8 SPYDER

- > **Price** £68k (buys a 2012 example with 20k miles on the clock)
- > **Engine** 4163cc 32v V8, 423bhp @ 7900rpm, 317lb ft @ 4500-6000rpm
- > **Transmission** Seven-speed dual-clutch auto, all-wheel drive
- > **Performance** 4.5sec 0-62mph, 187mph, 22mpg, 294g/km CO2
- > **Suspension** Double-wishbone front and rear
- > **Weight/made from** 1685kg/aluminium
- > **Length/width/height** 4431/2029/1244mm
- > **On sale** 2010-2014





auto blends low-speed manners with high-speed ratio-slap-ping that makes a third pedal redundant. Just be sure to invest £400 on the flat-bottomed steering wheel and more tactile paddleshifters.

### SERVICING AND RUNNING COSTS

The Audi R8 can run on two-year/variable (on-board diagnostics tip you off) or annual servicing, your choice. West London-based Audi specialists Fontain (fontain.co.uk) quote £450 including VAT for a basic variable service (oil/filter change, pollen filter change) – the pollen-filter can take an hour to swap in cars with B&O audio, and Fontain's price factors this. A major variable service (oil and filter, pollen filter, spark plugs, air filter) costs £800, with the plugs changed at six-year/57k intervals, the air filter at 60k miles.

Jaguar F-type servicing is scheduled at 12-month/16,000-mile intervals. Depending on labour and oil costs, Jaguar estimates the first three services will cost a total of £1075, the second service being the priciest. F-type buyers can also opt for three- (£995) and five-year (£1495) service plans.

Based on a sensible, apocryphal 40-year-old male who loves exposing himself to the elements, Adrian Flux Insurance quotes £400 for the Audi, £344 for the Jag.

### RELIABILITY

Fontain report a few issues with the R8: 'FM radio reception can be poor, usually down to either the wiring or the amplifier, which is behind the spoiler,' says Sunny Bhamra. 'Shock-absorber leaks are common, and they're expensive to replace. On early R8 V8s – but only on the coupes in our experience, convertibles came later – we've had clutch issues on manual cars, the pedal not fully retracting. That's led to master- or slave-cylinder replacements, the latter a gearbox-out job.'

One recall is listed for the R8: the fuel hose may come into contact with the heat shield, potentially causing leaks. Cars affected spanned VIN numbers WUAZZZ428AN001451 to WUAZZZ427CN000245. Check any purchase has been back to the dealer for remedial work.

The Jag is covered by a three-year warranty, and European roadside assistance. Extended warranties are available – mileage dependent, see jaguar.motor-admin.com – and come with £750 of MoT insurance. The F-type has been subject to two recalls: some V6 AWD Convertible's (VIN's SAJW-J6FV8G8K17984 to SAJXJ6HL1GMK24640) with adaptive damping were fitted with incorrect anti-roll bars, wrong-footing the ESP system. The electric-power steering has also had gremlins, with 'additional unexpected steering inputs' affecting VINs SAJAC61B1G8K22719 to SAJAL61X08K22402.

### KEY OPTIONS

The Audi R8 had more options than an out-of-contract Lewis Hamilton. These include parking sensors (£670, or £1070 with rear camera); Bang & Olufsen audio (£950); metallic or pearlescent paint (£715), and matt finishes that cost a whopping

### AUDI R8 V8 SPYDER

PAUL REDDING

I love the R8's design, V8 engine, and its R-Tronic gearbox – you become more involved in the process by having to release pressure on the throttle during upshifts, it reminds me of my biking days. The servicing costs are realistic, it's usable every day, and quattro comes into its own through sweeping curves. Niggles? The temp and fan controls feel lightweight, the sat-nav is badly dated, and you have to remove the engine to change the spark plugs! But to me the R8 is as much an icon as the Ur quattro.

### JAGUAR F-TYPE V6 S AWD CONVERTIBLE

ROGER MILES

I've always loved the F-type, but I've never been the heroic opposite-lock type, so all-wheel drive suits me. It still feels really agile, but the way it puts down power really boosts confidence in tricky conditions. Combined with the soft-top, it's a real all-seasons car – you could drive to St Moritz for skiing, or drop the roof on a summer's day. The fact that it's so refined, looks fantastic – I think the bonnet bulge to clear the all-wheel-drive enhances the style – and is so comfy just seals the deal.

R8's magnetic ride suspension fidgety at low speed, epic when pressing. Jag a bit softer, but pliable



R8's exterior design hasn't dated, but cabin has. Pre-Milton Keynes sat-nav



F-type cabin neat and cool. Passenger grab handle and 'copper' paddles rock!






£4800; you could also choose carbon-ceramic brakes (£7295), adaptive suspension (£1175) and bucket seats with electric lumbar support (£2500). 19-inch alloys were standard, but customers could option high-gloss or titanium finishes (£570). To see the full list, download an info pack from parkers.co.uk.

Desirable F-type V6 S optional equipment includes body-colour roll-over bars to replace satin chrome; all 13 colours bar Ebony Black or Polaris White are either £700 or £1250; two styles of 19-inch wheel are standard, others £500, 20-inchers £1000-£2576. Carbon brakes are bundled with 20-inch Storm alloys for £6400. Extended leather costs £2725, and you can upgrade the six-speaker stereo for either a £400 10-speaker (£400) or 12-speaker (£1700) Meridian alternative.

## VERDICT

Whether you buy the Jag or Audi, you get great looks, easy comfort, eager performance, fun dynamics and very high levels of refinement, roof up or down. No easy losers here.

The F-type feels like it becomes less of a driver's car in the shift from coupe to roadster. It's still exciting, but the coupe is sharper. But you get the comfort of a three-year warranty, that new-car magic, and you can plan out all your costs if you're on a leasing deal. The case against the Audi is mostly about its ageing dash and that you don't know what it's been up to before. Still, the case *for* is compelling: you get supercar looks, running costs similar to an RS4's, and someone else has swallowed the early depreciation. Dynamically, it's hard to separate from its tin-top sibling too.

For those reasons, the Audi nips ahead to take the win. 

@lamBenBarry



Both cars run on standard 19in rims, and both can be upgraded for the cost of a decent used hatchback

Jag looks bigger on the road, and is indeed longer and taller, but R8 is a full 106mm wider. Proper supercar hips!



## MY PERSONAL ICON

# Lotus 2-Eleven

Reliable, appreciating, special and fast – owner **Adrian Legassick** on the joy of 2-Eleven



**> 'I FIRST TEST** drove a Lotus, an Elise, in 2000. Previously

I'd owned a succession of hot hatches, M3s and the like, and wanted a fun second car. Our first child intervened, but three years ago I finally bought a Lotus, an S2 Exige. It was a real tool on track but for me it wasn't quite as great on the road as an Elise; not quite as pure. I test-drove the 2-Eleven 18 months ago with no intention of buying but the steering was so sweet; the 150kg weight advantage it enjoys over the Exige makes such a difference.'

**> 'I'VE COVERED** 1200 of the car's 3000 miles, including six trackdays, all of them at Brands and Goodwood. It's a joy to drive on a circuit, as you'd imagine. In a 2-Eleven the braking points are so late!



People assume that, being light, powerful and mid-engined, the 2-Eleven must be a bit spiky, but that's not the case. Tyres make a big difference. Mine came on Yokohama A048s but I've switched them for the Avon ZZRs the Lotus Cup race series uses – they're faster and much more forgiving. I had Lotus re-map the ECU too, from 252bhp spec to 260 – £600 but it makes the engine so much smoother.'

**> 'I'VE MADE MORE** warranty claims on our family cars than I have on the two Lotuses I've owned, and after six trackdays the 2-Eleven still has 4mm of healthy tread depth and plenty of meat on the brake pads. I took it in for its service and MoT yesterday and it cost me £250 with Bell and Colvill [bellandcolvill.co.uk]. Factor in the car's rising value and you realise these are easy cars to own.'

**> 'DRIVING TO A** circuit in the rain isn't much fun but the rest of the time it really is a special car to drive. People love it too; they're forever chatting to you in traffic.'

## One we found

**2008 Launch Edition**, 4861 miles, **260 map and sports exhaust**, £32k



Lotus 2-Eleven: comes with the spirit of Colin Chapman as standard



PERSONAL DEALER

# The best Bentleys money can buy

**Derek Bennett** is brand director for the HR Owen Group and has spent the last decade immersed in all things Bentley. Here are his three tips for the best Crewe has to offer. Interview by **Ben Whitworth**



## £70k-£110k, 2009-'11 | Continental GT Supersports

5998cc W12, 621bhp, 3.9sec 0-62mph, 204mph

**Is this a good idea?** 'Yes. The brutal biofuel Supersports has become a Bentley icon. When it was launched in 2009, the lightweight Supersports was the hardest and fastest car Bentley ever produced. The depth of engineering is exceptional – every dynamic element was honed to create a truly engaging driver's car. Ceramic brakes, quickshift gearbox, uprated suspension and 621bhp engine... no surprise then, that they are hugely sought-after models.'

**How much?** 'Owners tend to hang on to their Supersports, and they hold their value well so you won't be spoiled for choice. Prices start around £70k – but at that level make sure they have a full Bentley service history – and rise to around £110k for full-spec low-milers.'

**What's going to break?** 'Like other Continental models, the Supersports is a pretty robust bit of kit. Check the suspension – replacing a worn top arm is a £2k job. Also keep a close eye on the high-mounted third brake light and make sure it's functioning correctly – if the surrounding seals have leaked and a full replacement is needed, you're looking at the thick end of £3k.'

**Crippling running costs?** 'Expect to pay £650 for an interim service, and £1k for a major service. Front ceramic discs and pads cost £1190, 12 new sparkplugs cost £460.'



## £45k-£55k, 2006-2011 Continental GTC

5998cc W12, 552bhp, 4.8sec 0-62mph, 195mph

**Is this a good idea?** 'Few other cars possess such a feelgood factor. It rides beautifully, is hand-finished and delivers four-season versatility.'

**How much?** '£45k means tidy early models with decent miles; £55k gets later models with lower mileages.'

**What's going to break?** 'No issues with the fabric roof, but ensure plenum chamber at the windscreen base is regularly unblocked or water leaks into the wiring loom, a potential £3k fix.'

**Crippling running costs?** 'Annual costs are decent – bank on £1500k – which is no more than a high-end Merc SL or BMW 6-series.'



## £100k-£150k, 2010-present Mulsanne

6750cc V8, 505bhp, 5.1sec 0-62mph, 184mph

**Is this a good idea?** 'The Mulsanne is about individuality – there's nothing else like it, and that blown V8 is big on charisma. So, yes, in a word.'

**How much?** 'Each Mulsanne takes 570 hours to build and that's reflected in the price – and its level of stateliness that few rivals can match.'

**What's going to break?** 'Mulsannes eat through tyres, engine beams go (a £3k fix), and the front timing chain cover (£3k) should have been replaced under warranty if defective.'

**Crippling running costs?** 'Expect to shell out £1800-£2500 a year over and above petrol and tyres.'

car  
CARS  
FOR  
SALE

FIND YOUR  
PERECT USED  
CAR WITH CAR  
MAGAZINE.  
MORE THAN  
200,000  
USED CARS  
FOR SALE AT  
CARMAGAZINE.  
CO.UK/CARS-  
FOR-SALE

## NOW WITHIN REACH

# Renault Clio RS 200

Renaultsport's old-school 200 is the Clio we all love. Fast fun has never been so affordable...

**THE SWITCH TO** turbo and paddle-shift 'box in the current Clio RS has left us lukewarm, which is why we still hanker after the outgoing RS 200. With its barrel-chested nat-asp 2.0-litre lump dishing up 197bhp and 159lb ft working hand-in-glove with a talented chassis, transparent steering and mighty brakes, it is true hot-hatch royalty.



**THE RS 200** is the one to have over the erstwhile 197. Sure, the power increase is negligible, but you get a chunk of more readily available torque and shorter ratios in first, second and third. It leaps off the line like a scalded cat and screams to the redline.

One  
we found  
2009 Clio  
Renaultsport 200,  
54,000 miles, white,  
black alloys,  
£6150

**THE TRICKY DECISION** was between the standard car with niceties such as air-con, reach-adjustable steering column and squidgy plastics, or the stripped-out Cup model with its more focused chassis set-up and low-rent cabin. We'd say Cup every time.

**IF YOU'RE A** true Renaultsport obsessive with deep pockets, then the limited edition Raid should scratch your hot-hatch itch. Matt paintwork, leather and bigger 18-inch Bridgestone-shod alloys that generate even greater levels of face-distorting cornering grip were standard, enhancing an already tasty package.





# TIME TO GO RACING


Exclusively for newcomers to the sport, the Ginetta Racing Drivers Club fulfils your racing itch. Taking you to the UK's top circuits, you'll have step-by-step support as you earn those all-important racing stripes.

The all-inclusive package includes everything you need to go racing.

Buy the car for **£33,300**<sup>+VAT</sup>, and Ginetta gives you:

- Road-legal G40 Club Car
- 12 months road tax
- Two track days with expert tuition
- ARDS racing licence
- Four weekend racing series
- Full mechanical Ginetta support




 [ginettaTV](#)

 [ginnetcars](#)

 [ginnetcars](#)

 [info@ginetta.com](mailto:info@ginetta.com)

 0845 2 10 50 50

BEST OF ALL, THE CAR IS YOURS TO KEEP!  
**WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?**



A month in the life of 14 cars – starring Mondeo, Golf R, McLaren 650S, Huracan, Range Sport & more

# OUR CARS.



If this was a proper banger race he'd nudge the rear of our long-term, sending it into a spin. So tempting



Mondeo vs Mondeo: Chilton chases down his own long-term at Essex Raceway





MONTH 8  
FORD  
MONDEO

**'SUNDAY, 1PM.** National Bangers,' reads the fixture for a meeting at Arena Essex Raceway. 'No Mondeos.' If you've read anything about the new Mondeo you'll already know that it's one of the toughest cars in its class when it comes to

keeping you out of trouble, and safe in a smash should the worst happen. Collision-avoidance auto-braking, lane-keeping assist and airbag seatbelts in the rear are all available as options, and all fitted to our five-star NCAP long term Titanium wagon. But it turns out toughness is in the blood. The original first-gen Mondeo is so tough it is effectively outlawed from ordinary banger racing classes to give the other cars a fighting chance.

Short oval racing rarely gets a mention in mainstream media, seen as the grubby, blue-collar poor relation to more glamorous (but often less action-packed) series like F1, or impossibly middle-class events like Goodwood. But there are races happening up and down the country every weekend. You'll have seen the cars being hauled to races on the back of trucks; some of you might have seen the 'Banger Boys' documentary on the History Channel. Oval racing can be fast, exciting and it's comparatively affordable, whether you're watching or driving.

There are all sorts of oval formulae, from 1000cc Minis driven by 11-year old kids, to Brisca F1 stock cars – custom single-seat racers with thundering V8s and huge roof-mounted wings. You might be surprised to learn that it's not all about destroying the other cars. Some series are non-contact, but bangers, though ostensibly a race to the line, has always been about the bust-ups.

We've come to Essex Arena near Purfleet, a stone's throw from the Dartford Bridge, to find out more. Founded on the remnants of an old cement works site by legendary racer Chick Woodroffe, Arena Essex held its first car race in 1978, later adding speedway, and now drifting days too. Chick departed for the great oval in the sky a few years back, but his daughter Debbie meets us in the offices overlooking the track and points us in the direction of John Harris, who's head is buried in the engine bay of a windowless Mondeo.

There's the trusty Zetec motor under the bonnet, but what's that? A twin-choke downdraught carburettor? John explains that you can run the original injection system, but it's simpler to switch to carb-fuelling on a custom manifold, even if you have to stump up for a Megajolt ignition set-up to replace the redundant ECU. Other than ditching the original fuel tank for a tiny cell behind the driver's seat, and junking every bit of extraneous trim, the Mondeo appears exactly as it would have done when receiving its PDI two decades earlier – though with this much panel damage, we doubt it would pass.

So what is it about the Mondeo that makes it such a mighty banger? 'I think it's the subframe, and how it mounts to the car,' says John. 'The floor of the car will bend before the frame does. You ►

# Banger race, Sunday. No Mondeos

It was so unbreakable they outlawed the Mondeo from banger racing. We take our long-term Mondy back to its tough-guy roots. **By Chris Chilton**





can just keep going.' Ironical that the very trait that helped relegate the original Mondeo to a middling three-star NCAP rating makes it a brilliant banger winner.

The Mondeo's durability is a desirable trait in this sport because unlike the Sierra Sapphire stock car parked next to it in John's yard, which effectively features a home-built box-section spaceframe chassis that extends beyond the bodywork, the banger comes with no additional metalwork to protect its radiator, wheels or suspension.

We head out on to the track, a quarter-mile oval buried beneath the natural banking that forms the spectating area for those not in the stands. This one's a sealed surface but there are other venues around the UK still running on shale. John hurls the banger Mondy through a few fast laps while we wait at the side, finishing with a body-lurching hand-brake turn that morphs into a dramatic tyre-smoking burnout.

'Jump in,' he says through the glassless screen aperture, 'I'll take you round.' I climb into the bog standard 1990s road-car seat then buckle up the proper racing harness, an odd mixture. There's no dashboard, no instruments no other interior trim. That diet should help pep up the performance and tighten the handling, but if I'm honest, I'm not expecting fireworks. This is a bog-standard 20-year old Mondeo on a track so short you'd struggle to get out of second gear. I mean, how fast can it feel?

Answer: very. The rush of wind batters our faces as we tear down the straight before John pitches the car hard into the first right-hander. The back tyres slide wide and a giant puddle of filthy water from John's footwell catapults straight over the tunnel onto, and into, my shoes. He gathers the slide neatly, right foot feathering the throttle on and off, on and off, to keep the nose tucked in tight to the giant kerb. Then it's another short sprint up the opposing straight and into the other curve. We're one car on the track and my heart is pumping. The thought of doing this with 30 cars fighting for every inch of this tiny stretch of tarmac, and another 10 dead ones strewn along the way, is hard to imagine.

John's an old hand at this. Racing before the Mondeo was even a twinkle in Henry's tool chest, as JD Bangers he runs

## It's a bog standard 20-year-old Mondeo. I mean, how fast can it feel? Answer: very

a £90 Banger Stunt Experience with Debbie where you can learn handbrake turns, J-turns and the infamous pit manoeuvre beloved of banger racers and US pursuit cops, involving nudging the rear of the car ahead from the side, sending it into a spin. Spectacular, but safe.

Was it always so? Has safety improved since the days when Austin Cambridges were the banger of choice? 'God, yeah!' exclaims John. 'These days the drivers have fireproof overalls and balaclavas, back then you could race in tracksuit bottoms, whatever you had on. To keep the insurance people satisfied we installed safety fences at the track and we have proper fuel tanks now. We used to use old fire extinguishers and turn them upside down. But the nozzles used to snap off and petrol would be all over the place.'

In his younger days John was a wrecker rather than a racer. 'I never lapped, I used to like to turn round at the bottom bend and wait for the cars coming towards me. Anyone who gave me a hard time, sooner or later they'd meet me in the corner.'

The Mondeo sounds like it would be perfect for that sort of destructive mission but, despite its inherent toughness, the ubiquitous Ford seems to have changed the style of competition.

'The Mondeos have killed it,' says John. 'People spending £400 on a set of tyres don't want to get them punctured and you've got guys taking their cars to rolling roads to tune them up. You don't want to put £600 into a car and have it trashed after half a lap.' It's less about crashing and more about racing.

Will new-shape Mondeos ever make it onto the banger circuit? John doesn't think so, but with millions of first generation examples built and now available for a pittance, it doesn't sound like the biff-em boys are about to run out of donors anytime soon.

As for our car, it's proved tough enough to stand up to 11k miles of abuse with just an underbody rattle from a misaligned fuel pipe that needed reshaping, and a sticky sunroof, the latter less obviously fixable say the techs, and requiring a two day headlining-drop investigation. Two days? Can't imagine John's crew standing for that. Maybe we should borrow from the banger. Bolt a steel plate over the top and be done with it.

@chrischiltoncar

### From the driving seat

➕ Impressively hushed cruiser ➖ Disappointingly American interior trim ➕ Massive cabin space... ➖ but boot space only fair ➕ Strong mid-range punch... ➖ but not great on fuel ➖ It's a big car with a big turning circle. Optional parking sensors a must

↓ Our man Chilton roughs it. 'Where's the heated windscreen switch? Ah...'



### LOGBOOK FORD MONDEO TITANIUM 2.0TDCi

➤ **Engine** 1997cc 16v diesel, 178bhp @ 3500rpm, 295lb ft @ 2000rpm ➤ **Gearbox** 6-speed dual-clutch auto, all-wheel drive ➤ **Stats** 8.7sec 0-62mph, 135mph, 130g/km ➤ **Price** £26,865 ➤ **As tested** £31,135 ➤ **Miles this month** 1638 ➤ **Total miles** 11,495 ➤ **Our mpg** 38.6 ➤ **Official mpg** 56.5 ➤ **Fuel this month** £208.54 ➤ **Extra costs** £0







## Separated at birth

The Golf R is so unique in character that there's really only one thing like it: its Audi S3 twin brother. By Ben Barry

### MONTH 6 VOLKSWAGEN GOLF R

**ALL SORTS OF** hot hatches are vying for your cash, but at ballpark £30k Golf R territory, many skew the balance more towards hardcore thrills – Civic Type R, Renaultsport Megane, Astra VXR – than the more grown-up Golf. What's keeping those rivals honest, though, is that the R manages to balance its maturity with a bit of top-button-loosening tomfoolery.

So where else do you look if you don't want something that doesn't scream boy racer, but promises to deliver on a good road? There's the BMW 135i and – much pricier – Merc A45 AMG, but the R's closest rival lives in-house. The Audi S3 starts from £30,980 as a three-door, just £100 less than the Golf. It also uses the same 2.0-litre 396bhp/280lb ft turbo engine, same Haldex all-wheel drive. You can have both with three- or five-door bodies, manual or dual-clutch gearboxes. You'd have the Audi, wouldn't you?

This month I tried both to find out, and I reckon I'd still buy the Golf. I liked the Audi a lot, and it's a lovely thing to live with: beautiful build, great refinement, easy performance. But I prefer the Golf's design – to me there's something particularly satisfying

about its chunky D-pillar – and when you drive both quickly, the Golf feels more interactive; the way the ESP subtly tweaks the brakes to tuck you into a corner and combines with the fast-acting all-wheel drive really heightens its agility. There's a nicer texture to the steering too, I reckon.

CAR reader and pal Phil Short disagrees though, and we should probably listen when he speaks because he used to tell rally drivers like Walter Röhrl which way to turn the steering wheel.

'My Audi S3 is just brilliant,' he writes. 'It's an S-Tronic with Magnetic Ride and it's a surprise to me that this model isn't more widely appreciated. I think the Audi looks nicer inside and out, and it holds its value better. Okay, it's mechanically identical to the excellent Golf R that another friend has, and with very little price difference, but I can't see that the Golf is better.'

Want to pitch in with your take on these two mega hatches? Drop me a line.

@iamBenBarry

### From the driving seat

➤ Bags of traction courtesy of Haldex awd, but turn-in agility too thanks to clever ESP tuning, and more useful rear bias than previous generations ➤ Plenty of performance, but our Seat Cupra 280 felt stronger with less



In the blue corner, the Golf R, and in the... well, you get the picture. Audi's on the right

### LOGBOOK VOLKSWAGEN GOLF R

➤ **Engine** 1984cc 16v turbocharged four-cylinder, 296bhp @ 5500rpm, 280lb ft @ 1800rpm ➤ **Gearbox** 6-speed manual, all-wheel drive ➤ **Stats** 5.3sec 0-62mph, 155mph, 39.8mpg, 165g/km ➤ **Price** £31,475 ➤ **As tested** £35,640 ➤ **Miles this month** 1262 ➤ **Total miles** 5921 ➤ **Our mpg** 34.7 ➤ **Official mpg** 39.8 ➤ **Fuel this month** £189.38 ➤ **Extra costs** £0

## Mind your head (and your legs)

### MONTH 4 AUDI TTS

**H**OW OFTEN do you use your rear seats? Giggling Caterham owners can turn the page now, but we suspect most readers would find a back-bench option a useful feature to have – even if chairs three and four are of the occasional +2 variety. And that's exactly what lurks in the back of the TT.

As you can see from my contortions, they're on the tight side. In fact, I'm not sure I can hand-on-heart say I could ever sit in them with anything resembling comfort – let alone safety – for even a short ride back from the pub. But then I am 6ft 3in tall and only by pushing the passenger seat right forward and cricking my neck can I fit in at all. No wonder Audi rates the seats as fit for sub-1.48m-tall folks only. Which really means children. And accommodating kids back there is

indeed simplicity itself. My seven- and nine-year-olds slot in to the Audi's second row with nary a murmur of complaint and it's this level of practicality that marks the TT out as a more rounded sports car than something like an MX-5.

The boot's pretty big too (it gobbles 305 litres of clobber at one swallow) and every time I lift the tailgate I smirk when I see the sticker warning of imminent decapitation should you deign to slam the boot shut when rear-seat passengers are braving those back seats. Is being 'TT'ed a common injury at A&E wards across the country? We'd love to know...

**TIM POLLARD** @

TimPollardCars

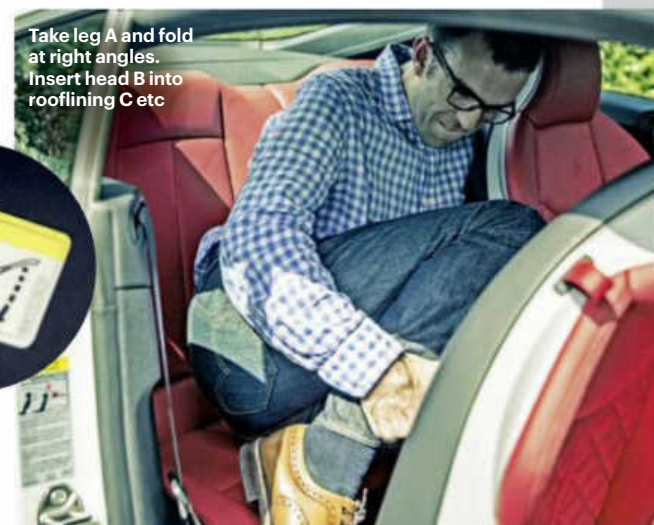
### LOGBOOK AUDI TTS COUPE

➤ **Price** £40,270 ➤ **As tested** £46,565 ➤ **Miles this month** 1634 ➤ **Total miles** 4614 ➤ **Our mpg** 28.0 ➤ **Official mpg** 40.9 ➤ **Fuel this month** £330.61 ➤ **Extra costs** £0

### From the driving seat

➤ Tight rear seats ➤ Better 2+2 rather than 2+0 ➤ 20in rims make for busy ride ➤ Still loving the oomph ➤ LED headlamps are mega now winter's drawing in

Take leg A and fold at right angles. Insert head B into rooflining C etc





## COUNT THE COST

**Cost new** £113,211 (in Germany) (including £32,974 of options)

**Dealer sale price** £76,730

**Private sale price** £73,077

**Part-exchange price** £69,443

**Cost per mile** 14p

**Cost per mile including depreciation** £3.14



## Overtaken by the pace of change

Seems like we've only just finished charging it up, yet our plug-in S-class is already out-of-date. A good time to unload it. **By Georg Kacher**

**GOODBYE  
MONTH 10  
MERCEDES  
S500 PHEV**

**THERE IS NO** denying that a long-wheel-base S-class sends the wrong message to the Save the Whales generation. But even hardcore Greens prick their ears when this 2140kg electroboat glides past them, almost noiselessly, majestic yet earth-friendly. The aha-effect is then confirmed by the full-scale PLUGIN HYBRID farewell lettering on the bootlid. I have learned to read minds in this car, in particular the mimic transition from 'here comes Kroesus' to 'a millionaire with a social streak, good luck to him.' It's in town, in E-mode, below 40mph, when what is now sold as 500e makes captain courteous feel most content with himself. After all, he is at the helm of the world's most environment-friendly luxury car this side of a Tesla Model S charged with CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral electricity. And yet this can only be the starting point of the e-revolution, a truly admirable effort which is nonetheless counting down the months until it is bettered by the next chapter in the book *Modern Alternative Drivetrains*.

Life with the most complete Mercedes ever has become kind of a black-and-white routine. The bright side depends on the availability of devices you can plug into. Last December it was no problem to find a free hook-up lot at the airport, shopping

mall or public parking. Now, Greater Munich's entire 220V infrastructure seems to be occupied 24/7. Timing is of the essence, in more ways than one. While 116 electric horses and the instant torque they generate provide plenty of extra punch, when compared to the 70kWh of the most basic all-electric Tesla, the Merc's 8.7kWh power core can only do so much. Like promise a zero-emission range of 20 miles – which halves as soon as you join the autobahn.

Ready for Charge is the most often displayed icon. When you leave home with a brimmed charge in Hybrid mode, the ever-hungry lithium ion cells await feeding again after 30 miles. Although the V6 petrol engine will do that when you hit the charge button, this defies the purpose and only makes sense when approaching a restricted area like a low-emission city centre. I have a hunch that my big Benz is only an interim solution. Although fairly priced at roughly the same level as the 455bhp S500, the PHEV version is bound to age more quickly due to the fast progress of battery technology, e-motors and performance electronics. Coming soon are smaller, lighter energy packs with shorter charge cycles and EV ranges of, eventually, 60 miles.

Like the S400 mild hybrid before it and the 48V P290 after it, S SK 4207 is thus kind of a time capsule, a production car about to become a piece of auto history. It was sensationally advanced when I first got it, but it will soon be overtaken. Think of it as a smartphone on wheels, best before June 2017 when the facelifted



TOM SALT

### From the driving seat

⊕ Either nearly silent or very quiet  
⊕ Exceptional ride comfort  
⊕ Goes like stink when you feel like it  
⊕ Okay consumption for this kind of car  
⊕ Palatial accommodation, quality second to none  
⊖ Real-life electric range disappoints  
⊖ Compromised by smaller boot and cable salad





Then you see the 'plug-in hybrid' badge and your v-sign freezes mid-flick



A year ago this was cutting edge, now borderline obsolete. Scary times

S-class is due. Don't get me wrong: the white dominates the black. There is always enough AC/DC available in standby mode to out-sprint that 5-series at the lights, but this unique no-noise supremacy, the surprise and delight as you hush past pedestrians, the strong social acceptance fusing with blatant opulence – all these positive impressions last 45 minutes max.

Despite its strengths, I wouldn't have chosen the S-class; had it been available, I would have opted for the less extrovert C350e. Even so, I do feel a bit like a pioneer now, and I am ready for the next level of electromobility as soon as it becomes available.

I won't miss the Merc for the stubborn charge cable (which never is quite long enough) or for the complicated controls, but as far as the driver environment goes, this is Hermès and Loro Piana combined; those seats are incredible; the Burmester audio is sublime; the optional equipment deserves 11 out of ten on the fancifulness chart.

What's next in the Kacher garage? Maybe a Jaguar XJ-C V12 resto project, perhaps a used Cayman. Seems that, for the time being, my thirst for ultra high-tech has been quenched.

## LOGBOOK MERCEDES-BENZ S500 PLUG-IN HYBRID

> **Engine** 2996cc 24v V6 turbo petrol with plug-in hybrid electric drive, 436bhp @ 5000rpm, 354lb ft @ 1600rpm > **Gearbox** 7-speed auto, rear-wheel drive > **Stats** 5.2sec 0-62mph, 155mph, 65g CO2/km > **Price** €109,778 > **As tested** €154,890 > **Miles on test** 12,372 > **Total miles** 38,973 > **Our mpg** 27.0 > **Official mpg** 100.8 > **Fuel cost overall** £2036.09 > **Extra costs overall** £0

Our 500X with its sibling Renegade. The Jeep's less funky than it looks

MARK RICCIONI



## Shootout in Little Italy

MONTH 3 **FIAT 500X**

**IN AN INTERRUPTION** to our regular programming, I feel I need to comment on Mr French-Constant's little group test with the 500X (my 500X) (CAR, October). Up against Honda HR-V, Jeep Renegade (a 500X made by 'Murican off-road enthusiasts) and Mazda CX-3, it was the latter that came out on top.

The podium must have been a rather horizontal affair though, because each contender scored a middling three-stars-out-of-five, saying much about the overall quality on offer in this particular segment. In fact, it was the Renegade that stood out most in Anthony's mind, not because of any particular prowess, but because it wasn't a copycat 'soft roader'. Instead there was four-wheel drive and a huge array of green-lane-inspired gimmicks, like a muddy splat where the redline for the rev counter should be and 'To New Adventures!' etched around the ignition barrel. All that was missing was a 'One Life, Live It' bumper sticker...

I see where he's coming from, mind, as too many new cars these days are built to fulfil a particular set of parameters and do nothing more – and definitely not anything exciting. But despite those extra little touches, in my mind it doesn't make the Renegade either better or more noteworthy than the 500X, or the CX-3 for that matter. In fact, up against the identikit Fiat (beyond similarities beneath the surface, a quick glance around the cabin reveals the sat-nav



is shared, ditto the window switches, steering-wheel buttons, and air-con controls minus a little chrome applique) I reckon it's worse, with heavier steering, a noisier engine and reduced visibility. A few design flourishes can't beat superior(ish) engineering.

Where does that leave the Fiat though, especially in the context of so-so opposition? Well, I'm reminded of CJ's sales pitch when he first suggested it as a successor to my Mini. 'I quite liked the Fiat on the launch,' he wrote. 'So I'll hope it'll suit you.' And you know what? It does. Normal service (with a full explanation of my reasoning, which isn't damning it with faint praise) resumes next month.

**BEN PULMAN** @thebenpulman



## From the driving seat

⚡ Diesel clatter is now a background noise I don't really notice, but... there's a rattle! Not sure where from – door or dash. It's there at idle/low revs

## LOGBOOK FIAT 500X 1.6 MULTIJET CROSS

> **Price** £20,095 > **As tested** £24,320 > **Miles this month** 1463 > **Total miles** 3838 > **Our mpg** 47.5 > **Official mpg** 68.9 > **Fuel this month** £155.69 > **Extra costs** £0





The unnecessarily long way home, yesterday

WAYNE LENNON

## Multi-purpose vehicle?

The McLaren's settling in nicely, helped by the fact that there's not much it can't do. **By Ben Miller**

**MONTH 2  
McLAREN  
650S**

**LIFE WITH A** McLaren 650S Spider inevitably involves giving plenty of passenger rides. Obliging could hardly be described as a chore, and can prove useful for finally silencing family members previously convinced that their Alfa Mito is 'a rocket ship'.

Any true supercar must be able to impress in this scenario – talk of advanced composites counts for nothing if a car can't render a ten-year-old boy hysterical. And I had worried for the McLaren on this score, largely because the last supercar I was fortunate to spend any real time with – CJ's Lamborghini Huracan – might have been crafted from the wheels up with impressing passengers as its driving design objective, hence the wild styling, banshee V10 and lime green seats.

I needn't have worried. Our Spider may be stealth of paint, rendered as it is in dark Storm grey, but the orange calipers and diamond-cut wheels work to dramatic effect against the car's menacing form. The McLaren seems just as capable at invoking silent awe as any Lamborghini. The doors help. The lack of an obvious handle delights newcomers, as does the effortless way in which each one hisses up like a butterfly wing on its strut. A true supercar must have event doors. Front-hinged and outward-opening? Please.

Once aboard the twin-turbo V8 yelping into life ramps up the anticipation nicely, as does dropping the roof. The next few

minutes have now begun to adhere to a script of sorts. Passenger expresses delight at the quality and design of the cabin, coos at seats, then plays with nearest air vent (which look identical to those used on McLaren's F1 pitwall 'office', though in the 650S they ventilate a far happier environment). Throttle goes to the full extent of its travel for perhaps three seconds. Passenger goes silent, grasps handle. 650S negotiates corner or roundabout at speed without roll, protest or incident. Passenger grunts, then starts laughing as the car's speed drops back to normal and the McLaren reverts back to its plush-riding, auto-shifting best-behaviour.

And the rest of the time, when you're on your own, the 650S shines with a deeply satisfying brilliance across an impressively broad operating window. On dry roads you know well it's predictably accomplished,



Basically, you input what kind of mood you're in. 650S does the rest

### From the driving seat

- Gorgeous steering, particularly in Sport mode
- Heady yet delicate turbo thump
- Aces all kinds of roads and all kinds of journeys
- 17mpg makes for frequent stops
- Stability control inextricably linked to handling mode

effortlessly eclipsing any previous personal bests you have set with its blend of any-rev thrust, mighty grip, fantastic steering and wickedly strong brakes. It's just as engaging in the streaming wet too, the multi-level traction and stability systems allowing you to explore the available grip in complete safety. The deft damping and communicative, encouraging steering also swell your confidence. For me the car's at its best on wet roads, rear window dropped to better hear the engine and the underbody aero flinging a vast GT3-style wake into the atmosphere behind you. The only snag in such conditions is that because the stability systems are linked to the Handling mode, switching to Sport, for its firmer damper set-up and weightier steering, also slackens the electronic leash. There's a logic there of sorts, but it's interesting to note that on the 675LT McLaren has decoupled the two.

And if you've a couple of hundred miles of ground to cover on more mundane roads the 650S is no less capable; refined, comfortable and shot-through with an intangible but ever-present sense of special-ness. Set the chassis to Normal, the gearbox to Auto and the DAB radio to talkSPORT, pop a Starbucks in the cup holder and you're ready for any journey, even the kind of four-hour stints that have Huracan pilots grumbling.



### LOGBOOK

#### McLAREN 650S SPIDER

➤ **Engine** 3799cc twin-turbo V8, 641bhp @ 7250rpm, 500lb ft @ 6000rpm ➤ **Gearbox** 7-speed auto with paddleshift, rear-wheel drive ➤ **Stats** 3.0sec 0-62mph, 204mph ➤ **Price** £215,520 ➤ **As tested** £251,080 ➤ **Miles this month** 739.5 ➤ **Total miles** 1315.3 ➤ **Our mpg** 17.4 ➤ **Official mpg** 24.1 ➤ **Fuel this month** £64.90 ➤ **Extra costs** £0





### ↑ Has been upgraded, but this one's just fine

Ordered in August 2014 and delivered that November, our 292bhp SDV6 twin-turbo diesel just missed out on the upgrade which brings another 14bhp, 74lb ft and 3mpg, and drops the car two tax bands. But I have no complaint with the easy, torquey performance and economy which can nudge a real 30mpg.

### ↓ Big black rims look great, but never again

A friend with a beautiful old Range Rover Classic insists that off-landers should only be specified with small wheels and clear glass all round. I think modern design suits privacy glass and big wheels, but the slight ride penalty and the obviousness of even the smallest nick on our maxed-out 22-inch rims means I'll downsize next time.

MONTH 10 **RANGE ROVER SPORT**

## Our premium SUV at close Range

Often it's the details that let down an otherwise silky smooth long-term. Not so here, but best not to mention the infotainment. **By Ben Oliver**



### ↑ Colour and trim options: feeling brave?

Having looked at the (very conservative) online configurator for another premium SUV recently, I have renewed respect for the huge range of colour and trim options the RR Sport offers. I also had a sit in the new Bentley Bentayga, and it doesn't feel that much more premium than our ebony-and-tan-upholstered Range Rover.



### ↑ 'Infotainment' long overdue an upgrade

In his report after borrowing the RR Sport for a Le Mans trip, Ben Pulman confused my respect for the accuracy of the sat-nav's mapping with a liking for the 'infotainment' system as a whole. Don't get me wrong: the touchscreen interface is clunky, slow, and prone to tantrums: the worst thing about a great car.

### From the driving seat

- ⊕ Design still striking, paint even better
- ⊕ Cabin does luxury, looks and functionality...
- ⊖ ...except for the touchscreen, which is rubbish
- ⊕ Engine is strong: even better with upgrade
- ⊕ Handling in Dynamic mode superb

### LOGBOOK RANGE ROVER SPORT 3.0 SDV6 HSE DYNAMIC

➤ **Engine** 2993cc 24v twin turbodiesel, 288bhp @ 4000rpm, 442lb ft @ 2000rpm  
 ➤ **Gearbox** 8-speed auto, low range, all-wheel drive ➤ **Stats** 6.8sec 0-62mph, 138mph, 199g/km ➤ **Price** £66,250 ➤ **As tested** £75,607 ➤ **Miles this month** 1258 ➤ **Total miles** 12,725 ➤ **Our mpg** 25.8 ➤ **Official mpg** 37.7 ➤ **Fuel this month** £231.78 ➤ **Extra costs** None





# Laser-guided James posts a quickest lap

A stint in Andy Priaulx's race simulator, a waft of a laser pen, a few laps of a kart track and, hey presto, we're gods! **By James Taylor**

**MONTH 7  
GINETTA  
G40 GRDC**

work's only a component part of what the iZone centre's all about; co-founded by international Touring Car winning machine Andy Priaulx, it aims to turn quick drivers into winning ones by setting to work on everything from balance and motor control to nutrition and interpersonal skills. After a crack at some of the harder-than-it-looks reflex-testing equipment in the gym area (designed to train everything from brake-pressure feel to peripheral vision), I find myself inside one of iZone's high-tech simulators wearing a fetching pair of eye-tracking glasses. I'm driving a virtual Ginetta, just like the one I arrived at iZone in, on a virtual Silverstone – the same layout the G40 and I won races on for real just a few months ago (CAR, August).

I think iZone commercial director Neil Riddiford probably realised he'd perhaps coached higher-calibre hotshoes than me when I blundered into the end of the pitwall within seconds of setting off. 'Without wishing to be rude,' he says, gently, 'I think perhaps you're treating this too much like a game...' Because rather than some kind of epic PlayStation, the simulator at iZone is a training tool, first and foremost. Take the eye-tracking software. You know those drivers who bumble around fixated on the corner they're in, rather than the one ahead? Turns out I'm one of them. 'We're programmed to aim our vision low,' Riddiford explains. 'When we're walking we're looking for obstacles, at school we're trained to look at our desk, on the road we're watching for brakelights

and potholes.' He aims a laser pointer at where my focus should be, and it's rarely lower than the horizon line. Rather than looking at a corner's apex, I'm X-raying through bridge parapets and grandstands towards sections of track that aren't even in view yet. And here's the thing – I'm a full 2.5sec quicker on the lasered lap than before. Yes, Silverstone GP's a long circuit and I'm still getting used to the simulator, but it's startling stuff nonetheless. Riddiford likens it to switching from dipped beam to high beam at night on the road. That's not the only revelation of the session. Suggesting I'm overthinking things, he asks me to call out letters from the alphabet at random while I drive. The result? My second-fastest lap of the session. Bizarre. 'Our subconscious knows how to drive,' he says. 'Quite often you may drive home and barely remember any of the journey. Sometimes we can go faster when we don't think about it.'

I've never been so keen to stay in a classroom, but the G40 and I had another appointment. In a genius moment of tenuous link-building, want2race competition organiser Ben suggested I retrace the steps a typical entrant would take – all get an iZone session, and the majority qualify at a major karting centre. So I was headed to Daytona Milton Keynes for a track session with a difference. How many times have you been at a kart circuit and imagined driving a car around it? Or whether one would even fit? If any car's going to feel at home on a miniaturised track, it's our Lilliputian G40. Turns out it relishes it, in fact. Daytona's flowing 1360m layout is larger than you'd think, enough to get some serious weight transfer going on in the quicker corners, snick third gear on



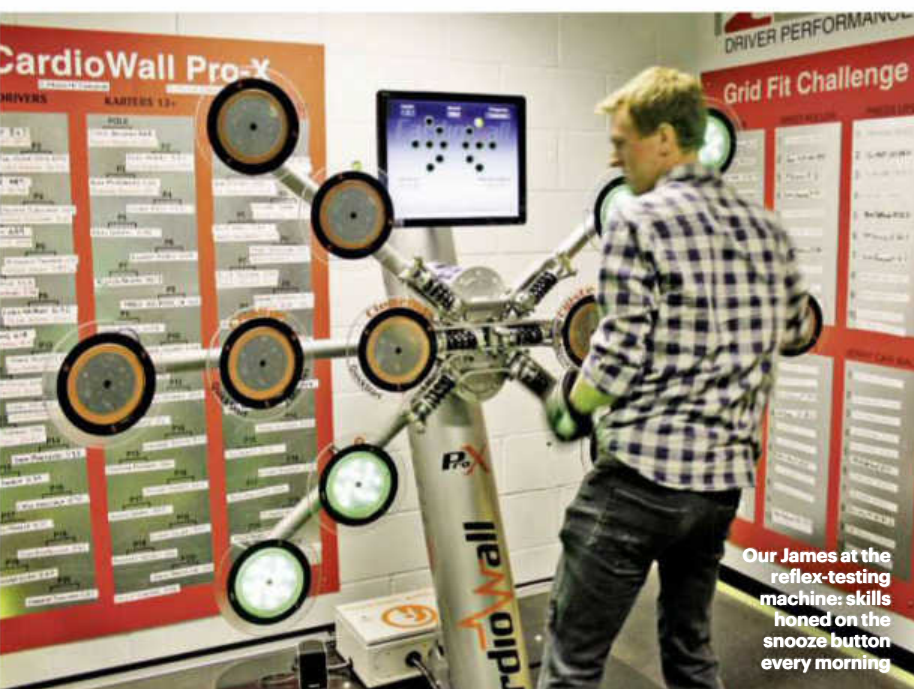
**Four-stroke kart vs four-pot Ginetta on the kart circuit at Milton Keynes. Not the foregone conclusion it may appear**



## From the driving seat

- ➕ G40 loves a good racetrack – any racetrack
- ➕ Real car easier to drive than a simulator
- ➖ Turns out my driving has room for improvement
- ➖ Lack of ventilation makes the cabin a tad toasty





Our James at the reflex-testing machine: skills honed on the snooze button every morning



the back straight and even, once I'd got over the fear of bumping into any barriers, use the locking diff to slide around a bit. Brilliant. Chance also to explore a long-held theory of mine: that any kart (even a lawnmower-engined rental jobbie) will be quicker round a small circuit than any car (even a darty racing one). Slick tyres and ant-spec centre-of-gravity beats horsepower any day, surely? Well, bang goes that one. I went around two seconds slower in a brief run in one of Daytona's have-a-go four-strokes than I did on my best lap in the Ginetta. Not the most scientific of tests, admittedly; I was being extra careful in the car, and only had time for a handful of laps in the kart. A great endorsement of the G40's nimbleness though. And if I'd only thought of calling out a few random letters while lapping, it might have gone quicker...

@JamesTaylor\_5

↑ Ford Zetec engine is tweaked with Ginetta sump, throttle bodies and alternator unit

### LOGBOOK GINETTA G40 GRDC

➤ **Engine** 1800cc 16v 4-cyl, 135bhp @ 5000rpm, 110lb ft @ 4500rpm (est) ➤ **Gearbox** 5-speed manual, rear-wheel drive ➤ **Stats** 6.0sec 0-62mph, 130mph ➤ **Price** £39,960 ➤ **As tested** £35,940 ➤ **Miles this month** 448 ➤ **Total miles** 4463 ➤ **Our mpg** 25.5 ➤ **Official mpg** n/a ➤ **Fuel this month** £97.90 ➤ **Extra costs** £0



## Our own personal VW Group emissions crisis

### MONTH 6 SEAT LEON X-PERIENCE

**S**LAP BANG IN the middle of the Volkswagen Group emissions crisis, I had one of my own. The Diesel Particulate Filter warning light flashed up on the dashboard of the Leon. Panic stricken, and with my neighbours diving for gas masks and the safety of their Anderson shelters as my pox and NOx riven car arrived home from the school run (yes, dear reader, my children have been exposed to its deadly emissions, but at the moment, they live), I took drastic measures commensurate with such a dire emergency: I consulted the manual.

How could this have happened? Usually it's the sort of thing that occurs if you live in big cities doing lots of short runs that don't allow the filter system to get up to temperature and burn the particulates off. Admittedly I'd spent three days tooting about town, but only the Sunday before we'd had a particularly satisfying run down the A1 to see *Inside Out* at the Peterborough Showcase. Great film, good filter temperatures.

Nevertheless, back to the current crisis. It seems the Leon needed a run of at least 15 minutes at an average of 60mph to get the filter to operate fully. I didn't have a lot of time, certainly not enough to call DEFRA or COBRA to clear the vicinity and it was still rush hour, but out I ventured. No good. Traffic was too heavy and I had a deadline. I returned back through empty streets like Charlton Heston as the last man alive in a 1960s disaster movie.

Not in zombie limp-home mode though, which meant we had not yet reached the denouement of the situation, entailing the rescue services of a SEAT dealer. Later that day, I bravely tried again, heading north towards Newark, whose occupants blithely went about their day, blissfully unaware of the pestilential package of particulates heading their way. And then, just five miles south of the sleepy little market town, it happened: the light went off.

A close shave. I returned home, vowing never again to go more than two days without driving to Peterborough. It's a heavy price, but one worth paying.

STEVE MOODY @Sjmoody37

### From the driving seat

- Extra travel gives a smooth ride
- Beefy diesel with plenty of in-gear shove (and working particulate filter)
- Can be raucous under heavy load
- It's no sporty machine: increased height means more body roll



⬅ The manual: like *Protect & Survive*, you hope you'll never need it

**LOGBOOK SEAT LEON X-PERIENCE SE TECHNOLOGY 2.0 TDI 150 PS 6-SPEED MANUAL**  
➤ **Price** £26,370 ➤ **As tested** £28,285 ➤ **Miles this month** 378  
➤ **Total** 6074 ➤ **Our mpg** 47.2 ➤ **Official mpg** 57.6 ➤ **Fuel this month** £40.15 ➤ **Extra costs** £0



'It's that bloke with the Lambo again. Third time today...'



## COUNT THE COST

**Cost new** £224,836 (including £38,076 of options)  
**Dealer sale price** £194,236  
**Private sale** £187,291  
**Part exchange** £178,241  
**Cost per mile** 29p  
**Cost per mile including depreciation** £5.98

# The Huracan passes through

...leaving a trail of devastation in our wallet. So, are supercars like other people's kids: fun, but great to hand back? **By CJ Hubbard**

**GOODBYE MONTH 6 LAMBORGHINI HURACAN**

**WELL, AFTER 8188** miles since July, including a day lapping Rockingham and a 190mph run on the autobahn, you can't say we haven't used it – and could even argue we abused it, though I promise the roadkill/rear

arch-liner interface reported last month most definitely wasn't avoidable. But our short stint of life with a Lamborghini Huracan has now come to an end, and it leaves a gaping hole that not even Ben Miller's McLaren 650S can fully absolve.

There's just something about a Lambo that brings out the schoolboy in everybody – the opposite sex included. It's like an aura, which goes beyond raw performance and enters the realm of what, for want of a better word, we'll call theatre. It's not just the swivelling heads – prompted by the industrial timpani of that 5.2-litre naturally aspirated V10, held by the madcap elegance of those angular, ground-hugging aesthetics – but the positive appreciation it attracts from (almost) everyone who encounters it. People loved seeing this car, to such an extent that many broke that traditionally aloof British resolve and took the trouble to compliment it. Nothing else I have ever driven has so comprehensively enthralled.

As the mileage tally suggests, this was no garage queen. I drove it every day that I didn't have to be driving something else, to such an extent that curious colleagues practically had to best-of-three me at Rochambeau in order to prise away the keys. It lived out in the open, on my driveway, every night – and although this means at the bottom of a cul-de-sac, largely obscured by a hedge, this didn't stop the doorbell ringing of an

evening, usually at the behest of a group of local kids. There was never any trouble though. Unless you count the occasion it was parked outside my parents' house in Dorset and somehow prompted every passing genius to pause and rev their engine for a moment. That's one way to show your enthusiasm.

So, what's it like to daily-drive a Huracan? Genuinely, an unrelenting pleasure. Sure, the seats caused complaints, refinement isn't a strong point, and I would rate the visibility as 'good enough' rather than perfect (certainly, you can see more out of the back of a new R8), but if you can afford the running costs there really isn't anything to worry about. I did see a few warning lights, but these were all related to misbehaving sensors rather serious component failures – it was an early-build car – meaning the biggest technical issues I encountered were a slow puncture (£540 for a new rear) and a malfunctioning washer jet (fixed under warranty). Other motorists were always happy to let it out at junctions, and there was no sense of getting bored with the performance. That I kept my licence clean will go down as one of the wonders of the universe.

With maximum commitment, this 602bhp wedge doesn't so much accelerate as jump in time and space. I'll miss its ability to instantly silence passengers, if not the (very) occasional angst it caused by suddenly materialising behind slower traffic; no matter how much space you leave, the sudden presence of a Lamborghini does apparently have the facility to shock. Whether you'd say the same of the fuel bill is between you and your accountant; suffice to say my next car is going to be less profligate...

@ir\_427



**Your Fiesta doesn't get this kind of attention, but then it spends a tenth of the time in filling stations**

## LOGBOOK LAMBORGHINI HURACAN LP610-4

► **Engine** 5204cc V10 dual injection, 602bhp @ 8250rpm, 413lb ft @ 6500rpm  
 ► **Transmission** 7-speed dual-clutch, all-wheel drive ► **Stats** 3.2sec 0-62mph, 202mph, 290g/km ► **Price** £186,760 ► **As tested** £224,836 ► **Miles this month** 1724  
 ► **Total miles** 16,354 ► **Our mpg (overall)** 19.4 ► **Official mpg** 22.6 ► **Fuel cost overall** £2386.35 ► **Extra costs overall** £540 (one rear tyre)

ALEX TAPLEY





## Vauxhall Corsa VXR MONTH 2

By Ben Whitworth

**ON PAPER**, the Corsa has the perfect ingredients to deliver a piping hot-hatch. Grunty turbo engine, trick exhaust system, stiff and stubby three-door chassis, uprated Koni dampers, big Brembo brakes, Drexler limited-slip diff and sticky Michelin Pilot Supersport rubber. Mix that all up with a hefty visual dose of gobby yobby VXR attitude, a sprinkle of Recaros and 18-inchers, and you should have a slightly unhinged hoonmobile that majors on fast and frisky fun. You should, but you don't. The VXR is undeniably brisk, and can slingshot its way through corners with alacrity, but it's just not that much fun to drive. It feels leaden and inert with little of the

effervescence and sparkiness I was expecting. Only when it's taken by the scruff of its thick metallic green neck and wrung to within an inch of its life does it shake off its dynamic torpor and show its true mettle. Which is great on a deserted and well-known B-road. But for the remaining 99.9% of the time I'm behind the wheel, it makes for a frustratingly disappointing daily driver.

@benwhitworth

### LOGBOOK VAUXHALL CORSA VXR

> Price £17,995 > As tested £22,135  
> Miles this month 1716 > Total miles 2767 > Our mpg 32.1 > Official mpg 37.7 > Fuel this month £336.55 > Extra costs £0



## Lexus NX300h MONTH 5

By Greg Fountain

**BEING SMITTEN** with the NX300h isn't easy. It's an SUV with less room in the boot than a Focus estate and a staggering 172 litres less than the Toyota RAV4 on which it's based (if you half fill the RAV4 with nickel metal-hydride battery packs first it equals things out a bit). The NX is a hybrid with poorer mpg than Jaguar's diesel-powered F-Pace (54.3mpg plays 57.6), it's heavier than an Evoque and it's slower to 62mph than a Skoda Yeti Monte Carlo (whatever that is). So its CV creaks like the door of Dr Watt's house in *Carry On Screaming*.

But neither the Toyota nor the Jag nor the Evoque nor the Skoda has these chairs. So sumptuous is the oatmeal leather (I'm making this up –

it's probably called 'blonde ocelot'), so fabulous the 10-way adjustable powered seats, that you'll never again be amazed while testing sofas you can't afford in Heal's. The interior of the NX has surely been fitted in error by some ghastly production mix-up. Seriously, if they had nicked it from – or sub-contracted it to – Bentley you couldn't be surprised. It is delicious, and it reduces the NX's shortcomings to scattered ashes.

@GregFountain1

### LOGBOOK LEXUS NX300h PREMIER

> Price £42,995 > As tested £44,640  
> Miles this month 1255 > Total miles 7518 > Our mpg 39.0 > Official mpg 54.3 > Fuel this month £218.33 > Extra costs £0



## Citroën C4 Cactus MONTH 9

By Anthony French-Constant

**THE CACTUS'S** screen-washer system has been chugging water like a Chicken Korma-cautious visitor to the 2015 World Championship Chili Cookoff – this year held in Reno, Nevada, where the inhabitants briefly forfeit racing P51s round pylons in favour of racing piecemeal for the Portaloo.

Odd. I had assumed a system which introduces water to the screen via the wiper arms themselves to be more frugal than one which takes a run-up from the bonnet.

Either, then, a notably petite camel in Day-Glo orange waterwings has furtively claimed squatter's rights in the reservoir, or the latter has all the capacity of a

blunt-eared bat's bladder...

One litre of overpriced screen washer fluid later, I had my answer; optimistically wobbling a large watering-can over the filler nozzle, I'd barely emptied the spout alone before the pipework frothed into overflow, leaving the mixture so concentrated I wouldn't be surprised to see the wipers melt like boiled liquorice within the week.

### LOGBOOK CITROËN C4 CACTUS BLUE HDI 100 MANUAL FLAIR

> Price £17,990 > As tested £19,330  
> Miles this month 937 > Total miles 7530 > Our mpg 56.4 > Official mpg 83.1 > Fuel this month £85.90 > Extra costs £0



## Renault Twingo MONTH 7

By Mark Walton

**THE TWINGO** and Smart ForFour may be the same car under the skin, but that doesn't make them the same car. For starters, our Twingo Play SCE costs £9995, whereas this posher ForFour Prime is £12,315. It's hard to make like-for-like comparisons – both share the same three-cylinder engine and running gear, but their characters are as divergent as the trim levels. They're actually different sizes, for starters – the Smart is shorter by 100mm, believe it or not. I prefer the look of the Twingo, not least because of hidden rear-door handles that make it look like a racy sports coupe (in my mind). Inside, the Smart has more sophisticated trim, and a futuristic dashboard

with (in this example) a big, optional touchscreen. But the Twingo has a stripped-back, simple charm about it – it's still a bit 'Renault 4', where the Smart feels 'mini-Mercedes'. That extra kit means the Smart is heavier too, and a fraction slower – and in this world of wheezy 1.0-litre engines, every second counts. So I'll stick to my bumble bee, and its rip-roaring 14.5sec 0-62mph time, thank you very much.

### LOGBOOK RENAULT TWINGO PLAY SCE 70

> Price £9995 > As tested £10,585 > Miles this month 553 > Total miles 5000 > Our mpg 40 > Official mpg 62.8 > Fuel this month £70 > Extra costs £0



# THE ULTIMATE IN PERFORMANCE UPGRADES AT DMS AUTOMOTIVE WE'VE BEEN UNLEASHING AUTOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE FOR OVER 19 YEARS

**DMS CLS63 AMG (EVO AUGUST '14)** "ENGINE UPGRADE ADDS HUGE PERFORMANCE AND REAL CHARACTER"

**DMS 1M (EVO MARCH 12)** "THERE'S A REAL RIP TO THE WAY THE REVS PILE ON ABOVE 4000RPM"

**DMS SL65 BLACK SERIES (EVO OCTOBER '10)** "IT FEELS LIKE THE LOVE CHILD OF AN SL65 AND A PORSCHE GT2"

**DMS 135i (BMW CAR MAY '09)** "THE STANDARD CAR IS GREAT BUT DMS HAVE SOMEHOW MANAGED TO TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL"

**DMS 997 TURBO 3.6 (EVO SEPTEMBER '08)** "IT'S EPIC, HILARIOUS AND ADDICTIVE IN EVERY GEAR, YET DOCILE WHEN CRUISING"

**DMS 997 TURBO 3.8 PDK (EVO JUNE '11)** "DELIVERY IS ALMOST UNCOMFORTABLY FORCEFUL"



**BELOW IS A SMALL SELECTION OF OUR MORE POPULAR MODELS TO UPGRADE. WE ARE ABLE TO UNLEASH PERFORMANCE FROM SMALL FOUR CYLINDER DIESEL ENGINES UP TO V12 SUPERCARS.**

## AUDI

AUDI RS6 4.0 T V8 » 690+BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
AUDI RS6 V10 » 680+BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
AUDI R8 V10 » 592+BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
AUDI RS4 B7/ R8 » 445 BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
AUDI RS3/RSQ3 » 420+ BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
AUDI S3 / GOLF R » 373+ BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
AUDI 3.0TDi (ALL MODELS) » 315+ BHP  
AUDI 3.0 Bi-TDi (ALL MODELS) » 380+ BHP  
AUDI Q7/A8 4.2 TDi » 400+ BHP

## BMW

M5 V10 » 548+ BHP (205 MPH)  
X5M / X6M » 618+ BHP  
1M » 411+ BHP  
M3 E90/92 » 445 BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
M135i/ M235i » 402 BHP  
M4/M3 3.0T » 520+ BHP  
M5 F10/M6 (STAGE 1) » 680 BHP  
M5 F10/M6 (STAGE 2) » 730 BHP  
F10 520D » 240 BHP  
F10 530D » 305 BHP  
335i/135i/X6 » 370+ BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
123D » 252 BHP

316D/216D/116D » 160 BHP  
318D/218D/118D » 225 BHP  
330D E90 » 296+ BHP  
320D E90 » 215 BHP  
420i/320i/220i/120i » 275+ BHP  
435i/ F30 335i » 390 BHP  
428i/328i » 295 BHP  
535D / 335D / X5 SD » 355+ BHP  
640D/335D/535D/435D » 390 BHP  
730D » 305+ BHP  
X5 4.0D / 740D » 370 BHP  
X5 3.0D » 305 BHP  
X6 X5.0i 4.4 » 500+BHP  
X6 M50D/X5M50D/550D » 450 BHP

## MERCEDES-BENZ

A200CDi/C200CDi/E200CDi » 175 BHP  
A250/C250 » 260 BHP  
A45/CLA45 » 420 BHP  
C300 HYBRID » 285 BHP  
A220CDi/C220CDi/E220CDi » 215 BHP  
C350/CLS350/E350/S350 » 315 BHP  
E400 /C450 » 420+ BHP  
C400 » 400 BHP  
'63' 5.5 Bi-TURBO ALL MODELS » 690+BHP  
'500' 4.7 Bi-TURBO ALL MODELS » 498+BHP  
S65 (W222) » 780 BHP  
SL65 BLACK » 720+ BHP (+DELIMIT)  
SL65 AMG » 690 BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
'55' AMG KOMPRESSOR » 580+BHP  
C63 AMG 6.3 » 530+BHP (+DE-LIMIT)

C63 AMG 4.0T » CALL FOR DETAILS  
SL63 AMG 6.3 » 560+BHP (+DE-LIMIT, RE-MAP & LOWER ABC SUSPENSION)  
CL600 Bi-TURBO » 580+ BHP  
SLK55 AMG » 420+ BHP (+DELIMIT)  
320 CDI V6 » 274 BHP  
350 CDI V6 » 312 BHP  
420 /450 CDI V8 » 358 BHP

## ALL 2015 RANGE ROVERS AVAILABLE

R ROVER SC 5.0 » 580+ BHP  
R ROVER 4.4 SDV8 » 395+ BHP  
R ROVER 3.0 TDV6 » 315+ BHP  
R ROVER 3.0 SDV6 » 345+ BHP  
EVOQUE/DISCO SPORT 2.2 DIESEL » 240+ BHP

## PORSCHE

997 TURBO/S 3.8 INC PDK » 611 BHP  
997 TURBO 3.6 » 625+ BHP  
997 GT2 RS » 670+ BHP  
996 TURBO/GT2 » 600+ BHP  
997 CARRERA S PDK » 400+ BHP  
997 CARRERA S » 376+ BHP  
997 CARRERA PDK » 368 BHP  
997 CARRERA GTS » 435 BHP  
997 GT3 UP » 436 BHP  
BOXSTER 3.4S » 336+ BHP  
CAYMAN S » 342 BHP  
MACAN 3.0D » 315 BHP  
CAYENNE GTS » 440 BHP

CAYENNE TURBO 4.8 » 578+ BHP  
CAYENNE TURBO S 4.8 » 600+ BHP  
CAYENNE 4.2 DIESEL » 450+ BHP  
CAYENNE DIESEL » 315+ BHP  
PANAMERA TURBO » 600+ BHP  
PANAMERA DIESEL » 315+ BHP

## EXOTIC / MISC

FERRARI CALIFORNIA » 487 BHP  
FERRARI 599 » 647 BHP  
FERRARI 430 » 525 BHP  
GALLARDO » 546 BHP  
LP560 » 608+BHP  
LP640 » 707 BHP  
HURACAN » 640+ BHP  
AVENTADOR » CALL FOR DETAILS  
MCLAREN MP4-12C » 700 BHP  
MCLAREN 650S » 720 BHP  
MURCIELAGO LP640 » 707 BHP  
MASERATI Ghibli 3.0S PETROL » 470 BHP  
MASERATI Ghibli 3.0 DIESEL » 312 BHP  
MASERATI GT/SPORT » 438 BHP  
MASERATI GT S / MC » 479+ BHP  
BENTLEY 4.0 T V8 » 690 BHP  
BENTLEY CGT / F-SPUR (INC 2013) » 680+ BHP  
BENTLEY GT SPEED (INC 2013 ON) » 695 BHP  
BENTLEY SUPERSPORT » 720+ BHP

**FOR ALL OTHER MAKES AND MODELS, PLEASE CALL US.**

SALES@DMSAUTOMOTIVE

WWW.DMSAUTOMOTIVE.COM

WORLDWIDE OFFICES AND INSTALLATION

UK: 0800 030 5555 INT: +44 800 030 5555



/DMSAUTOMOTIVE  
FOLLOW US FOR OUR LATEST NEWS



**MORE  
BHP  
EQUALS  
LESS  
RPM  
EQUALS  
MORE  
MPG**





# GBU.

Totally unique guide to EVERY car on sale in the UK, with a punchy view on all of them - yours included

## The Good, the Bad & the Ugly

### ABARTH

500 ★★★★★

> Pricey pocket rockets, all powered by 1.4-litre turbos in various stages of steroidal over-compensation. Divine details, dodgy dynamics  
> **VERDICT** Like a small yappy dog: noisy, excitable and likely to give you headache

### ALFA ROMEO

MITO ★★★★★

> Decent engines but generally rubbish to drive, Alfa's soggy-handling, hard-riding premium mini is crucified by the real thing and Audi's A1  
> **VERDICT** At least it's got its looks. No, wait. It's an ugly Alfa. It's got nothing

GIULIETTA ★★★★★

> Looked like a credible Golf rival for a while but now the game has moved on. Keen prices, but rivals are roomier, classier and more fun to drive  
> **VERDICT** Miles better than a Mito. Miles better than a 4C, even. Miles behind a Mk7 Golf

4C/4C SPIDER ★★★★★

> Sexy carbon two-seater over-promises and under-delivers on a double-your-dong-length web-scam scale. Spider a step in right direction  
> **VERDICT** Shoots for the moon, hits itself in the foot. Elise more fun, Cayman a better bet

### ALPINA

D3/B3 ★★★★★

> Twin-turbo petrol and diesel stonk and smooth auto 'boxes mated to a quality chassis, but watch for some questionable OAP-spec interior finishes  
> **VERDICT** Try an xDrive D3 Touring - it's what the M3 wants to be when it grows up

D4/B4 ★★★★★

> Same blend of fast and frugal as above but slotted into slinkier 4-series shell. ZF auto not as snappy as M4's twin clutch, but much smoother  
> **VERDICT** 53mpg and 62mph in 4.6sec? And you're alright with this, BMW?

D5/B5 ★★★★★

> Twin-turbo B5 petrol V8's 590lb ft could de-forest the Amazon while planet-loving D5 doesn't let meagre 155g/km prevent 174mph max  
> **VERDICT** M5 alternative with Touring body option you can't have with the real thing

B7 ★★★★★

> BMW doesn't make an M7, but Alpina does. Twin-blown petrol V8 delivers 'bahn-busting performance that's best enjoyed in Germany  
> **VERDICT** Niche S63 alternative hamstrung by ugliness of the raw materials

## NEW IN THIS MONTH



p151

**Vauxhall Astra**  
'In hatchback grandmother's footsteps, Focus and Golf turn round to find Astra standing right behind them'

### Peugeot 308 GTi

'Discreet styling hides playful proclivities. LSD keeps things tight while fantastic French chassis delivers lively rear'

p146



### Hyundai Tucson

'Dull to drive, duller inside. Someone get the Tucson a stepladder'

p144



XD3 ★★★★★

> X3 35d-based high-rise hot-rod delivers 350bhp, 516lb ft, and the horizon through your windscreen. Spoiled by a rock-hard ride  
> **VERDICT** Another niche BMW Munich leaves to Alpina, maybe 'cos Porsche Macan is better

### ARIEL

ATOM ★★★★★

> Only the Pope's lips get more up close and personal with the tarmac than an Atom driver, but there's zero protection when the heavens

open  
> **VERDICT** Spectacular toy. Great on track, barmy on road. Chassis doubles as a clothes airer, which is just as well...

NOMAD ★★★★★

> Not content with terrifying on tarmac, Ariel now offers the off-road Nomad. Gains a roll-over structure but still no doors...  
> **VERDICT** Don't forget to put the hot water on - you'll be needing a bath when you get home

### ASTON MARTIN

VANTAGE ★★★★★

> Ageing entry level Aston has ace steering, but make sure you go manual: plodding semi-auto is as dynamic as a Ron Dennis interview  
> **VERDICT** Longer in the tooth than Brucie, but constant updating means it's still desirable

VANTAGE V12/GT12 ★★★★★

> Cramming huge V12 into Vantage's V8-sized engine bay makes for a track weapon that thinks it's a hot rod. Superb chassis, but

another duff 'box  
> **VERDICT** Crazy cars, crazy prices - they want £250k for wild GT12, yet it instantly sold out

DB9 ★★★★★

> Recently re-skinned, and now with 8-spd ZF auto. Our long term had 'bespoke concerns' (the trustworthiness of a crack-addicted bank cashier)  
> **VERDICT** A beautiful GT, but same money buys more exciting V12 Vantage

VANQUISH ★★★★★

> Looking like the old DBS after 10 sessions of lipo, Vanquish's exquisite detailing hides modern carbon structure, but performance is a decade out  
> **VERDICT** Heart says buy, until a Ferrari F12 says bye-bye

RAPIDE ★★★★★

> Take that, Panamera! Aston shows Porsche how to make a supercar/saloon cocktail. Forget limo pretensions though, it's a four-door 2+2  
> **VERDICT** Pretty, but interior more dated than a New York socialite and as hard on your wallet

### AUDI

A1 HATCH/SPORTBACK ★★★★★

> Posh Polo does it all, from 1.0 miser to S1 micro rocket. Not cheap, even before you've splurged on options. £30k is a mouse click away  
> **VERDICT** Classy Mini rival that doesn't turn into Quasimodo when you tick the 5dr option

A3 HATCH/S/BACK/SALOON ★★★★★

> Your passengers will be in awe of the refinement and finish, unless they're nursing knees bashed in the back of the shorter three-door shell  
> **VERDICT** Brilliant hatch and not much financial gulf to a Golf. Try sporty S-Line on supple SE chassis

A3 CABRIOLET ★★★★★

> Premium sun-grabber without macho sports-car posturing. A bit tight in the back, but pretty tight in the bends too. Try a 1.8 TFSi with Sport trim  
> **VERDICT** Asexual drop-top for sensible shoes types. Worth the £2k premium over Golf

S3/RS3 ★★★★★

> Further proof that the Germans are still power junkies at heart. 296bhp S3 is trouble enough, while new 362bhp RS3 will do 174mph. Achtung, baby.  
> **VERDICT** Far better than they used to be, but not as exciting as they should be. Buy a Golf R

A4 ★★★★★

> All-new A4 is Captain Obvious in every way: lighter, smarter, better to drive - and only microscopically different to look at  
> **VERDICT** As you were, except inside, where tech obsession offs elegance. Rivals remaining calm

RS4 ★★★★★

> Brutal RS treatment makes a monster of ho-hum A4. No 4dr, no manual and no turbos, this wicked wagon's V8 redlines higher than Ferrari's 488GTB  
> **VERDICT** Pace and space, but rides like the tyres have a tic. No match for new C63



www.carsondemand.co.uk  
0333 323 2660

Try before you buy  
with leases starting  
from just 28 days



**A5 SPORTBACK ★★★★★**

> In a class of one until BMW finally got its act, and the 4-series Gran Coupe, together. Pretty and practical, but like its drivers, feeling its age > **VERDICT** Fatherhood doesn't seem so bad with family cars this handsome. Then you drive it

**A5 COUPE/CABRIO ★★★★★**

> Like a 4ft 8in Miss World, stunning A5 has the looks but not the legs. Yours will suffer too thanks to offset pedals and zero rear legroom > **VERDICT** Buying now? BMW 4-series. Feeling patient? Wait for 2016's stunning C-class coupe

**RS5 ★★★★★**

> Has iconic Quattro arches, but feels like it was engineered down the Arches at Phil Mitchell's EastEnders den of bodgery. Cramped too > **VERDICT** Great V8 can't save misfiring flat-footed coupe. Buy a BMW M4, or the better RS4

**A6 SALOON/AVANT/ALLROAD ★★★★★**

> Demure big Audi an unsung hero, refined and cheap to run. Allroad an SUV for agrophobics; twin-blown 309bhp BiTDi a proper mischief maker > **VERDICT** Base models short on wow, but a solid alternative to better-handling Jag XF

**RS6 ★★★★★**

> For wealthy mentalists who think the S6's 444bhp isn't enough, RS6 delivers 25% more and gives the new R8 V10 a hard time at the lights > **VERDICT** Beautifully finished all-weather family wagon that scares supercars silly

**A7 SPORTBACK ★★★★★**

> Slant-roof A6 takes styling cues from pretty '60s 100 coupe but can't out-cool Merc's CLS. More grippy than a sloth whose been sloppy with the superglue > **VERDICT** Stylish GT with sensible engines, but a sports saloon? My RS, maybe

**RS7 ★★★★★**

> Pricier, less practical RS6 with fastback rear, same guts but gets clever rear diff as standard for oversteer here, there and everywhere given room > **VERDICT** An Aston Rapide for the agrophobic, but we'd have the naughtier RS6

**A8 SALOON ★★★★★**

> Audi's elder statesman for elder statesmen has more tech than CES at Vegas but who wants people to think they're being chauffeured in an A4? > **VERDICT** Gadgets galore, but Merc's incredible S-class nails the luxury basics better

**Q3 ★★★★★**

> Dumpy dinky faux field forager is a yummy mummy fave. Forget 4wd and the diesels and go for light, zippy, 1.4 TFSi > **VERDICT** So much better to drive than it looks. Which it'd have to be, right? Unless it was an Alfa

**RSQ3 ★★★★★**

> Audi's first tall-boy RS model. Hearing of the £45k price or unleashing that 335bhp five-pot both elicit same incredulous gasp > **VERDICT** Who needs this stuff? Short people in a rush? What we do know is it's better than a GLA45 AMG

**Q5 ★★★★★**

**REPLACED SOON** > Car-like SUV offers everything from meek 180bhp front driver to a ballistic SQ5 bi-turbo diesel delivering RS performance without the fuel bills > **VERDICT** Still one of Audi's best. Beats a top-spec A4, if not a bottom-spec Macan

**Q7 ★★★★★**

> Formerly massive 7-seat SUV with Titanic-like weldiness morphs into massive 7-seat jacked-up estate car in new Mk2 guise > **VERDICT** Lighter and less thirsty than before, but still less charming than Jean-Claude Juncker

**TT COUPE/ROADSTER ★★★★★**

> Brilliant coupe gets virtual dash, and sharper handling. Try 2.0-FSI. Boot big, but rear seats for handbags only (some men have them, you know) > **VERDICT** A proper real-world sports car – but same money buys an early R8!

**R8 V10/V10 PLUS ★★★★★**

> Friday afternoon restyle meets Monday morning mechanics. New R8 offers no V8 for now, but V10 is back with 533bhp or Lambo-equalling 602bhp > **VERDICT** A Lamborghini Huracan for £50k less. Friendly but ballistic; playful chassis a joy

**BAC****MONO ★★★★★**

> Single-seat racer that took a wrong turn out of the pits. Pushrod suspension, Cosworth-tuned 2.3 Duratec and bath-like driving position > **VERDICT** Sublime track-tool with a six-figure price that'd net you a Cayman GT4 and an Atom

**BENTLEY****CONTINENTAL GT COUPE/CABRIO ★★★★★**

> The repmobile of millionaires. Reliable, well-built and yes, full of VW bits. Death Star smooth W12 now sounds more rebellious, while twin-turbo GT V8 S is joyful > **VERDICT** More of a sports car than its hefty GT image suggests

**CONTINENTAL GT3-R ★★★★★**

> Bonkers road racer with Max Power styling, no rear seats and shouty exhaust. Surprisingly nimble using 4wd and torque vectoring, and epically fast thanks to tricked up 580 V8 > **VERDICT** Uncouth drag racer for rich Russians

**FLYING SPUR ★★★★★**

> New Spur is sharper to drive, sharper to look at, softer to sit in, and feels less like a stretched Conti. Fridge and iPads essential options for pampered rear-seat recliners > **VERDICT** Think of it as a bargain Roller rather than a pricey A8

**MULSANNE ★★★★★**

> Huge, handbuilt anachronism, with twin-turbo V8 born in the '50s, buffed to perfection, and a field of cows sacrificed for your arse's pleasure > **VERDICT** Buy the Speed – any less outrageous display of consumption is just poor form

**BMW****1-SERIES ★★★★★**

> Only rear-driver in its class. Good for handling, not for cabin space. Just facelifted so now 3% less grotesque. 118i petrol a brilliant all-rounder > **VERDICT** Want a roomy, well-appointed hatch that's great to drive and look at? Buy an A3

**M135i ★★★★★**

> Last of the downsizing deniers, BMW's hot hatch stays with six-pot power when all rivals offer four. Undercuts mechanically identical M235i by £4.5k > **VERDICT** Storming drivetrain, but VW's incredible Golf R just pips it

**2-SERIES COUPE/CABRIO ★★★★★**

> Boot-faced booted 1-series is a Mustang with a couple of A-levels. 218d is 8.9 to 62mph and 63mpg; 4cyl 228i a cut-price, cut-down M235i > **VERDICT** Plainier than a margarine sarnie, but TT and RCZ can't touch its space/pace combo

**M235i ★★★★★**

> Shoestring M3 quicker than a Cayman and almost as costly if you're profligate with options. 322bhp std; 380bhp just a Supercar away > **VERDICT** Satisfyingly simple and a blast to drive. Coupe shell + manual 'box = purest thrills

**2-SERIES ACTIVE TOURER ★★★★★**

**BEST IN CLASS** > BMW in front-drive MPV shock. Decent drive, great interior. Need to cart OAP relatives around? You'll need the 7-seat Gran Tourer. Boom boom! > **VERDICT** The ultimate driving (to the park/crèche/post office) machine

**I3 ★★★★★**

> One of BMW's best cars is home to its finest cabin. Electric version has short range; hybrid is noisy and has a fuel tank like a flea's hip flask > **VERDICT** Carbon chassis supermini, electric power and £30k price. Did we wake up in 2045?

**3-SERIES SALOON/TOURING ★★★★★**

> Celebrating four decades of overpriced, undersized family cars. New modular engines make it better than ever, 320d (now sub-100g/km) still top choice > **VERDICT** Jag XE is treading heavily on its twinkling toes

**3-SERIES GT ★★★★★**

> High-rise Touring alternative almost as vast as a 5-series thanks to wheelbase stretch, but way more hideous. Another BMW design disaster > **VERDICT** A £35k Mondeo with a BMW badge. Why bother when the same-price X3 is so good?

**Number crunching**

Powered by:

**6 LOWEST SCORES IN 2015 EURO NCAP TESTS**

The latest crash tests are the toughest yet. But someone's still got to get 'must try harder'. These are the six lowest scorers tested this year

**Mazda CX-3 312pts**

Scored full points in both side-impact tests, and was rated 'good' for adults in the front seats. But was weaker for adults in the back – including a 'poor' whiplash rating.

EURO NCAP RATING ★★★★★  
ADULT OCCUPANT 85 CHILD  
OCCUPANT 79 PEDESTRIAN 84  
SAFETY ASSIST 64 TOTAL 312

**Fiat 500X 309pts**

Strong child occupant protection, but only 'adequate' for adult chest protection in the rear and during the more severe side pole impact test. Autonomous braking only optional.

EURO NCAP RATING ★★★★★  
ADULT OCCUPANT 86 CHILD  
OCCUPANT 85 PEDESTRIAN 74 SAFETY  
ASSIST 64 TOTAL 309

**Hyundai i20 301pts**

Mis-deployed curtain airbags marred both side-impact tests, but head protection was still rated as 'adequate' and critical body areas rated 'good'. No autonomous braking.

EURO NCAP RATING ★★★★★  
ADULT OCCUPANT 85 CHILD  
OCCUPANT 73 PEDESTRIAN 79  
SAFETY ASSIST 64 TOTAL 301

**Audi TT 295pts**

Audi says no-one over 1.48m tall should use the TT's rear seats, but Euro NCAP still rated protection as 'good' with its 1.5m dummy. Active bonnet helps pedestrians.

EURO NCAP RATING ★★★★★  
ADULT OCCUPANT 81 CHILD  
OCCUPANT 68 PEDESTRIAN 82  
SAFETY ASSIST 64 TOTAL 295

**Vauxhall Viva 278pts**

Insufficient airbag pressure in testing allowed the dummy's head to hit the steering wheel, and Vauxhall has promised to improve the 'poor' side-impact performance.

EURO NCAP RATING ★★★★★  
ADULT OCCUPANT 74 CHILD OCCUPANT 72  
PEDESTRIAN 68 SAFETY ASSIST 64 TOTAL 278

**Fiat Panda Cross 243pts**

Both head and chest hit the steering wheel here, resulting in 'weak' and 'poor' ratings in front adult impact testing. Maximum points for child crash protection, though.

EURO NCAP RATING ★★★★★  
ADULT OCCUPANT 70 CHILD OCCUPANT 77  
PEDESTRIAN 50 SAFETY ASSIST 46  
TOTAL 243



JATO Dynamics is the world's leading provider of automotive intelligence. To learn more check out [www.jato.com](http://www.jato.com)



## 4-SERIES COUPE/CABRIO ★★★★★

> 3-series in a shell suit subtly better to drive, but same great engine choices and almost as practical. Shame about the carryover cabin > **VERDICT** Crushes Audi's ancient A5. Folding hardtop cabrio weighty but worth it

## 4-SERIES GRAN COUPE ★★★★★

> Pretty and practical, like a bikini car wash, hatchback GC costs £3k more than 3-series but has std leather. Five belts but only four seats > **VERDICT** Smart and useful, much more than a niche exercise. But why isn't this the 3-series?

## M3/M4 ★★★★★

> M3 is alone only; coupe is M4. Both ditch V8 for 425bhp twin-turbo six with choice of manual or DCT auto. Still no xDrive 4x4 > **VERDICT** Dynamite drift machines' mega mid-range comes at the expense of old V8's joie de vivre

## 5-SERIES SALOON/TOURING ★★★★★

**BEST IN CLASS** > Hard to fault the default exec. Go for 520d or 530d M Sport, ZF auto, adaptive dampers. Ace adaptive headlights a £545 option > **VERDICT** Stylish as Teflon trousers but that drip-dry gusset is just so handy. Best exec bar none

## 5-SERIES GT ★★★★★

> BMW GB: 'The contours... make its attraction instant. Stylish presence of a saloon combines harmoniously with the sporty elegance of a coupe' > **VERDICT** Munich's Vel Satis. Hated by critics, loved by owners. All three of them

## M5 ★★★★★

> While our enthusiasm for the twin-turbo V8 is tempered slightly by the artificial engine noise, it's sublime to drive and gets better with every iteration > **VERDICT** Still the fast saloon daddy. 592bhp '30 Jahre edition' utterly magnificent

## 6-SERIES COUPE/CABRIO ★★★★★

> Anonymous big GT best enjoyed with mighty 40d diesel power. Plenty of room for four – if you fire your passengers into the back via a wood-chipper > **VERDICT** Under-the-radar GT bruiser, short on sex, but not on appeal

## 6-SERIES GRAN COUPE ★★★★★

> Coupe? It's a bloody saloon! And £20k more than a same-engined 5-series! BMW must chuckle at every sale. Still, rather nice > **VERDICT** Desirable enough to leave the 6-series coupe in the shade/showroom

## M6 ★★★★★

> Six-figure M5 in a shiny suit is even better to drive. Two-door looks good value beside Merc's S63 coupe, but can't touch a 911 GT3 for kicks > **VERDICT** M6 GC almost makes M5 redundant, but at £100k/18mpg you'll need two jobs

## 7-SERIES ★★★★★

> So high-tech BMW presumably ram-raided Google's R&D bunker, confident the 'carbon core' construction would enable it to drive back out > **VERDICT** Gesture control, remote parking, active anti-roll – it's got it all. But not the kudos of the S-class...

## X1 ★★★★★

> Ugly old one sold by the bucket load; all-new replacement is miles better to look at and to drive. It's a proper mini SUV now... > **VERDICT** It's even based on the fwd Mini platform. Swallow that bile now

## X3 ★★★★★

> Studiously un-gangsta SUV shuns petrol power – and M Power – options for solid diesel-only blend of handling and handiness. Looking better post facelift > **VERDICT** The BMW SUV we don't hate ourselves for liking

## X4 ★★★★★

> Blame the Evoque and people who bought the X6 for this carbuncle. £4.5k more than an X3, but better equipped and annoyingly better to drive > **VERDICT** Depressing X3 spin-off for grown-ups who still dream of being a footballer

## X5 ★★★★★

> One-time Premier League fave looking more like League 1 beside better-driving, and -looking rivals. Skinfint sDrive 25d is a rwd four-banger > **VERDICT** Still impresses with engines and quality, but thanks to Landie it's lost its lustre

## X6 ★★★★★

> All the impracticality of a coupe and all the

wasteful high-centred mass of an SUV. Genius. If you must, X40d gives best price/punch/parsimony > **VERDICT** Pointless pimp wagon. Buy a Porsche Cayenne or even an X5

## Z4 ★★★★★

> Sports car for post-menopausal women in lemon trouser suits. Coupe-cabrio roof hits boot space when folded. Base 181 spec sub-Wartburg > **VERDICT** No match for Boxster. Stick with mid-spec trim. And keep taking the evening primrose

## I8 ★★★★★

> Carbon-constructed 3-cyl hybrid supercar that's fun for four, as fast as an M3 and does 40 real mpg. Minor demerit: looks like it's crimping off a 911 > **VERDICT** Fascinating and fabulous. The future of the sports car is in safe hands

## BUGATTI

## VEYRON ★★★★★

**REPLACED SOON** > A decade on, still the ultimate hypercar, although more limited editions than a Vauxhall Nova take some lustre off W16-powered redefinition of what's possible > **VERDICT** Will we ever see its like again?

## CATERHAM

## SEVEN ★★★★★

> Still the benchmark for bobble-hatted Terry Thomas wannabes, the adaptable Seven comes in flavours from 160 3-cyl to mental road racers > **VERDICT** 80bhp 160 underpowered, 310bhp 620R lethal, 180bhp 360 model just right

## CHEVROLET

## CORVETTE ★★★★★

> Farm machinery meets space lab in fabulous 460bhp V8 symphony of composite materials, leaf springs and push rods. Shame it's left-hook only > **VERDICT** £60k for a bargain berserker. £20k more for the 650bhp Z06

## CITROEN

## C-ZERO ★★★★★

> Remember when electric cars were expensive, oddly packaged, with hardly any range? If not, refresh your memory with a C-Zero > **VERDICT** £6k for a Tupperware box. There are cheaper ways to carry your sandwiches to work

## C1 ★★★★★

> Trying hard to escape the clutches of its sister cars, the C1 can have a funky Aircscape cloth roof and half-hearted personalisation options. 1.0-litre has most pep > **VERDICT** Good, solid proletarian urban fare rather than hipster cool

## C3 ★★★★★

> Serious sibling rivalry issues as dull C3 loses out to dashing DS3. Now handles a bit better after a refresh, and has five doors. The end > **VERDICT** If you're not even the most talented in your family, how are you going to beat the rest?

## C3 PICASSO ★★★★★

> Compact supermini-based box that's fun to drive (avoiding the petrol one, mind) and well-packaged. Might not set pulses racing, but you'll get very protective of it > **VERDICT** They can take the piss, but it's a faithful, lovable friend

## C4 ★★★★★

> Recently refreshed C4 has all the edginess of a Hush Puppy deck shoe. But it's useful, anodyne transport and sub-100g/km BlueHDi models are very economical > **VERDICT** Nobody would hate you – or notice you – if you bought one

## C4 CACTUS ★★★★★

> An architect's wet dream. Sloppy to drive but otherwise a roomy family car with kid's toy colour combos. Airbumps will stop it kicking off in the car park > **VERDICT** Cheap yet brilliant. Why can't the French be this good all the time?

## C5 SALOON/ESTATE ★★★★★

> Be aware: this car is still in existence. Slow selling but roomy estate is fairly stylish and practical with Hydractive rear suspension > **VERDICT** There have been great French family saloons. This is not one

## C4 PICASSO ★★★★★

> Defiantly anti-cool family shifter. Touches like

lower rear windows and sprogwach mirror make mums go weak at the knees for its peace-and-bloody-quiet ambience > **VERDICT** Drives like a shed. Who cares, if Satan's brood shut up?

## BERLINGO MULTISPACE ★★★★★

> Recently refreshed with SUV aspirations, but still a wipe-clean tin lifeboat for cagoule-wearing Thermos-sipping birdwatchers. Rattles and drives like a van. Is a van > **VERDICT** Dogging cheapseats for aspiring Bill Oddie

## DS3 HATCH/CABRIO ★★★★★

> Surprise winner clad in John Lewis wallpaper prints. A middle-class rethinking of an average supermini. But even sporty 155bhp lacks sparkle > **VERDICT** Goes with your tablecloth and handbag. Gallic chic still desirable, done right

## DS4 ★★★★★

**FACELIFT SOON** > Jacked up hatchback that's not an SUV, but is sportier than a C4 but not actually very athletic. Work that out > **VERDICT** Found: if you recognise this car, please write to 1 de Gaulle Street, Paris, France

## DS5 ★★★★★

> Office joker in testosterone world of Serious Business Men. Quite appealing, with a lovely aerostyled cabin. Diesel Hybrid4 a good idea not executed properly > **VERDICT** Bland ubiquity will always beat charming quirkiness

## DACIA

## SANDERO ★★★★★

> Cheapest new car on sale not the worst. Yoghurt-pot plastics and pre-Glasnost styling can't detract from a spacious sub-six-grand runabout with Renault engines > **VERDICT** Austerity rocks. Right, Greece?

## LOGAN ★★★★★

> Estate looks like a Sandero that's reversed into phone box. Cavernous boot, but dreadfully unrefined thanks to all the brittle plastic and tin > **VERDICT** You put things in it. It will carry them for you. You can take them out. Job done

## DUSTER ★★★★★

> No-nonsense SUV that's ideal for wannabe peacekeepers on a ridiculously small budget. Buy the boggy 4x4 diesel in white for the full UN effect > **VERDICT** The Neighbourhood Watch will never be the same again

## FERRARI

## 488 GTB ★★★★★

> We were worried the turbos would ruin it, but while we'll miss the 458's 9000rpm wail, the 488 is more playful and even easier to drive. A stunning achievement > **VERDICT** Even the looks grow on you after a while. Rivals better dust off their gracious loser faces

## CALIFORNIA T ★★★★★

> L-plate Ferrari first of Maranello's new turbo cars. Boost management mimics naturally aspirated engines. Looks better, sounds worse > **VERDICT** Forget the unfair 488 comparisons, it's an SL65 rival and well worthy of the badge

## F12 ★★★★★

**BEST IN CLASS** > Jumbo GT with 700bhp turns like a supercar, cruises like a limo and drifts like a nitrous-guzzling M3. 488 gets the girl but this is the better car > **VERDICT** Multi-talented coupe makes Aventador look as sophisticated as a Piedmontese peasant

## LAFERRARI ★★★★★

**BEST IN CLASS** > 1000bhp hybrid hypercar where the electric bits exist to save tenths not icecaps. 499 to be built and all sold despite the £1.2m asking price > **VERDICT** The greatest single supercar of all time – except maybe the FXX K track version

## FF ★★★★★

> Supercar meets Scimitar in this luxurious two-door wagon with a fiendishly clever on-demand 4wd system via second gearbox > **VERDICT** Like an arranged marriage, love grows from respect, and certainly not at first sight

## FIAT

## PANDA ★★★★★

> Spacious city car with 'squircle' obsession, as roly-poly as the blobby looks suggest. Two-

pot TwinAir willing but thirsty when pushed > **VERDICT** VW up costs less, drives better and is nicer inside. Grin and bear it?

## 500/C ★★★★★

**FACELIFT SOON** > Panda in a retro frock is still a darling amongst trendy urbanites. Endless special editions keep it fresh, driving dynamics keep us underwhelmed > **VERDICT** Style over substance and a crashy ride. But the style is in high supply

## 500L/MPW ★★★★★

> Bloated supermini-sized people carriers, desperately attempting to cash in on city car's chic. Seldom has the point been so massively missed > **VERDICT** In-car coffee machine option the only purchase excuse

## 500X ★★★★★

> Compact crossover is Arnold Schwarzenegger of the 500 range – steroidal and somewhat limited in its range of abilities, but actually rather likeable > **VERDICT** Worthy Nissan Juke alternative works the 500 thing surprisingly well

## PUNTO ★★★★★

> Been facelifted more times than Joan Rivers but is somehow still alive. Now reduced to bare-bones range and budget price. We still wouldn't > **VERDICT** You might be tempted. Don't be

## QUBO/DOBLO ★★★★★

> Postman Pat's family wheels? Don't be daft, Pat's retired to the Caribbean and is living off the licencing rights. Drives a Bentley. A red one > **VERDICT** Van-based MPVs that put practicality first, people second

## FORD

## KA ★★★★★

> Take one Fiat 500, marginally improve the dynamics then snatch defeat from victory with dull restyle that removes entire reason to purchase > **VERDICT** Ford's worst car. Noisy, slow, plasticity, too expensive. Buy a used Fiesta

## B-MAX ★★★★★

> B-pillar-free Fiesta-based mini MPV gets rear sliding doors for maximum practicality but not the sliding rear seats of some rivals. Firm ride > **VERDICT** Buy with a 1.0 Ecoboost trim and Zetec trim for maximum school-run fun

## FIESTA ★★★★★

**BEST IN CLASS** > Still brilliant after all these years, Fiesta is poised and practical. Terrific new triples make up for an interior that would make the Chinese blush > **VERDICT** The best driving supermini. Even 1.0 models feel like hot hatches in waiting

## FIESTA ST ★★★★★

**BEST IN CLASS** > Feisty Fiesta is fluent where the flat-footed Focus falls. Trying say that quickly with the 180bhp Ecoboost on full reheat: f-ing fatiguing > **VERDICT** Definitive affordable hot hatch spoiled only by square-wheels ride

## ECOSPORT ★★★★★

**FACELIFT SOON** > Third-world hand-me-down is no fun to drive and reasonably roomy interior ruined by a daft side-opening tailgate. Nissan Juke monsters it > **VERDICT** A rare Blue Oval balls-up channelling the complacent Mk5 Escort spirit

## FOCUS HATCH/ESTATE ★★★★★

> Looking all the better for its 2014 refresh, the Focus shows Ford's chassis engineers know their stuff. So it's just the designers who have lost it > **VERDICT** Great to drive but the Golf is a more polished destination for your dough

## FOCUS ST ★★★★★

> Storming turbo four sounds so good it's almost more than your ears can take. Also more than the front tyres are able to deal with > **VERDICT** Exciting, but so's contemplating throwing yourself from the Shard. Buy a GTI

## MONDEO HATCH/ESTATE ★★★★★

> Delayed so long dealers will soon be doing MOTs and PDIs at the same time. Huge space and you can even have the 1.0 Ecoboost > **VERDICT** Everybody wants them new-fangled SUVs these days, but this is a great family car

## KUGA ★★★★★

> Fine-handling MPV now available with a 178bhp diesel – but not a dashboard that doesn't look like an earthquake in a switchgear factory. Small boot > **VERDICT** Good, but top-end versions stray into X3/Evoque territory



**C-MAX/GRAND C-MAX ★★★★★**

> More a roomier Focus than full-blown MPV, C-Max delivers driving pleasure to blot out family pain. 7-seat Grand version gets rear sliding doors > **VERDICT** Rivals are roomier, but none is better to drive. Just pretend it's the wife's

**S-MAX ★★★★★**

> Exploits latest Mondeo's undercrackers to full effect. Pricey, but still the best of the seven-seaters to drive > **VERDICT** Toys include electric everything and speed-correcting cruise control. Harder to beat than FC Barcelona

**MUSTANG ★★★★★**

> GI Henry's finally been posted to Europe and he's cutting in on the TT's dance. At last gets multi-link rear end, but rear-space could be better > **VERDICT** EcoBoost 4-cyl torquey but tedious; it's the V8 you want, if not its 18mpg thirst

**GALAXY ★★★★★**

> Goose to the S-Max's Maverick, new Galaxy is based on the same Mondeo-derived platform. Just as high-tech, but more spacious > **VERDICT** Great if you need a big 7-seater – fits adults in all rows with no human rights violations

**GINETTA****G40 ★★★★★**

> Pint-sized road-legal racer. Two models: G40R (civilised version, with carpets) and GRDC (actually a race car with numberplates) > **VERDICT** Tiny, twitchy and top fun. Pick the £35k GRDC and get free entry to race series

**HONDA****JAZZ ★★★★★**

> Brilliantly packaged supermini with typical genius mismatch of brain and social skills. Ordinary performance, extraordinarily unrefined > **VERDICT** If a Skoda Fabia had seats this smart, other superminis would call it a day

**CIVIC HATCH/TOURER ★★★★★**

> Wilfully different, won't-fully-want-one Golf rival whose big draw is its origami rear seats. 167mph Type-R lands soon (expect big skid marks) > **VERDICT** Capacious wagon makes most sense but a Golf is still more satisfying

**CIVIC TYPE R ★★★★★**

> Holy turbos! They've created a monster. Furious new 2.0-litre Type R produces 306bhp and hits 167mph. Scorched 'Ring included > **VERDICT** Did Dr Frankenstein do the exterior design? Live with the looks, love the performance

**ACCORD SALOON/TOURER ★★★★★**

> Ancient second-rate Mondeo rival dies any day, killed off by the market's move to SUVs – and ambivalence to overpriced ordinary saloons > **VERDICT** Mid-table League 1 side to the Mondeo's Champions League winner

**HR-V ★★★★★**

> It took Honda 10 years to build a second HR-V, and you're still left wondering why they bothered. Almost wilfully generic > **VERDICT** Jazz platform's magic packaging the only saving grace

**MORGAN 3-WHEELER****“As comfortable as riding over Niagara Falls in a barrel, and equally sane”****CR-V ★★★★★**

> Roomy but unremarkable SUV with a choice of two- or four-wheel drive. Unlike most Hondas won't need ear defenders to drown out road noise > **VERDICT** Kuga has the chassis, Qashqai has the style, but neither is as practical as CR-V

**HYUNDAI****i10 ★★★★★**

> Five-door city car that balances mature driving experience with strong value – even if it's not as cheap as it was. Five-year warranty, too > **VERDICT** Basic motoring done not just well but with a dash of style. Mid-spec 1.0 our choice

**i20 ★★★★★**

> No Fiesta to drive, but it's not as far off as you'd think, while the refinement and comfort offer plenty of compensation for the plain interior > **VERDICT** Like a pair of corduroy slippers: comfy but rather suggests you've given up on sex

**i30 HATCH/TOURER ★★★★★**

> Where the current crop of Hyundais got serious – which means it's now in need of a facelift as the mainstream moves ahead again > **VERDICT** 'Tries hard but lacks imagination' would be the i30's school report card

**i40 SALOON/TOURER ★★★★★**

> Vast Mondeo rival with huge boot and lots of kit. Facelift resembles a lizard with an Audi grille for a mouth > **VERDICT** Nearly-but-not-quite mainstream alternative plays value card well

**ix20 ★★★★★**

> Compact MPV and Kia Venga's ugly step-sister; roomy but ultimately forgettable > **VERDICT** Sorry, what were we talking about?

**TUCSON ★★★★★**

> Promising initial impressions of shiny-looking ix35 replacement tarnish quickly: it's dull to drive, duller inside and poorly refined > **VERDICT** We had high hopes. Someone get the Tucson a stepladder

**SANTA FE ★★★★★**

> Biggish SUV has always led Hyundai's assault on the European market from the front. Comfortable, self-assured and easy to live with > **VERDICT** A Hyundai you can choose without shame. Looks fresher than Waitrose parsnips

**i800 ★★★★★**

> Massive van-based people carrier that'll seat eight and still have space for their luggage. Ideal for part-time airport mini-cabbers > **VERDICT** It is what it is: a van with seats in. But it's a nice van

**GENESIS ★★★★★**

> Luxury saloon hamstrung by unsuitable petrol engine and they-must-be-joking price tag. Has silly

new winged badge and handles like a waterbed > **VERDICT** Step one of Hyundai's move upmarket. Well, it worked for Infiniti. Oh, wait...

**INFINITI****Q50 ★★★★★**

> Another American-market Japanese premium product that's lost in translation. Shame it wasn't lost at sea on the way over. Hybrid mega quick > **VERDICT** Like a tiny speck of fluff the Mercedes C-class casually brushes from its sleeve

**Q60 COUPE/CABRIO ★★★★★**

> Nissan 370Z after a back, sack 'n' crack. No diesel but V6 sounds ace and S models (4ws and LSD) are tidy in the bends. Looks dated > **VERDICT** Not without merit, but without a hope of talking us out of buying a BMW 4-series

**Q70 ★★★★★**

> Does it look like a rubbish Maser QP, or a slightly cooler Daewoo Leganza? Either way it's a novelty act without the novelty > **VERDICT** Worth considering over a 5-series, but only if Harald Quandt ran off with your wife

**QX50 ★★★★★**

> Blandly-styled EX crossover got a new badge but precious few new fans. Well equipped, but costly to run and not that great to drive > **VERDICT** Nothing to see here people, move on – to your local BMW dealer and its excellent X3

**QX70 ★★★★★**

> Striking jumbo jeep comes with more kit than a Knight Rider convention but the lavish cabin is too small and the fuel and tax bills anything but > **VERDICT** Taxi for Infiniti! Porsche's Cayenne has this one covered, old timer

**JAGUAR****XE ★★★★★**

> Straight-bat styling hides exotic aluminium chassis and class-leading handling. Bit tight on space though, and engines not a high point > **VERDICT** Rivals are better packaged but this is the driver's car in the class and a proper little Jag

**XF ★★★★★**

> Second-gen XF now 75% aluminium, looks like an over-inflated XE; bigger inside, smaller outside, still a great steer > **VERDICT** Diddy diesels moo more than a dairy; insert your own joke about cats and cream

**XFR ★★★★★**

> Massively capable but terminally tweed-wrapped M5 rival that's £10k cheaper, and 20% less rabid, than the real thing. Occasional traction > **VERDICT** Great chassis; great shame the superb XFR-S looks like such a dog's dinner

**XJ ★★★★★**

> Questionable styling but unquestionably excellent to drive and with a cabin fit for a Bentley. Lwb cars get extra 125mm of rear room > **VERDICT** Get a blindfold and guide dog to help you to and from the door and you'll love it

**XJR ★★★★★**

> Absurdly track-ready limo builds on already ballistic XJ Supersport, but bumps power up to 543bhp and tightens chassis (at expense of ride) > **VERDICT** More rare-groove than Elvis's first acetate, but spectacular – if you're up front

**F-TYPE COUPE/ROADSTER ★★★★★**

> Posh pauper's Aston sounds superb, goes well too. Forget basic V6 and choose from V6S and mental V8S. Now with manual and 4wd options > **VERDICT** So nearly sublime, but Cayman/Boxster duo cost less, entertain more

**F-TYPER ★★★★★**

> Ferocious rear-drive coupe-only R gets 543bhp and uprated chassis for an even sharper drive that's less knife-edge than the V8S soft-top > **VERDICT** Unlike other F-type coupes, this one is £5k more than equivalent cabrio, but feels it

**F-TYPE PROJECT SEVEN ★★★★★**

> Looks a little too much like the D-type equivalent of the old folks you see standing at the back of rock gigs, but still the best F-type yet > **VERDICT** Pray for sunshine: it's got 567bhp and the roof takes 20min to erect. Sold out

**JEEP****RENEGADE ★★★★★**

> Strange but true: yooof-targeting junior Jeep is built in Italy alongside Fiat 500X that donates its platform. Even stranger: it's not terrible > **VERDICT** Lower spec models outdriven by rivals; only the top Trailhawk cuts it in the rough

**CHEROKEE ★★★★★**

> Gimlet-eyed Disco post-Fiat Cherokee looks like the banjo-playing inbred from Deliverance. Despite generous kit count, we'd leave it on the porch > **VERDICT** Feels too cheap to be premium, too pricey/ugly to beat Qashqai

**GRAND CHEROKEE ★★★★★**

> Proper off-road credentials backed up by sensible running costs, but feels cheap. Ludicrous SRT8 version demolishes 62mph in five dead > **VERDICT** Makes sense at \$30k in the US, but doesn't drive or feel like a premium car

**WRANGLER ★★★★★**

> Incredible off-road, and much better than a Defender on it, but that's like saying Pol Pot was more benevolent than Stalin. 2.8 Merc diesel best > **VERDICT** When North Korea nukes us, this cold war cast-off will be all that's left moving

**KOENIGSEGG****AGERA ★★★★★**

> Evolution of Lex Luthor's original CC8S supercar features twin-turbo 5.0 V8 and carbon fibre wheels. R version even runs on E85 biofuel > **VERDICT** Yahoo! Yin to Volvo's yawning yang keeps Sweden's car output balanced



Official fuel consumption for the Volvo V40 T2 R-Design (manual) in MPG (l/100km): Urban 38.7 (7.3), Extra Urban 62.8 (4.5), Combined 51.4 (5.5). CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions 127g/km. MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect real driving results.



# THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE UGLY

## KIA

### PICANTO ★★★★★

> Tough-looking budget Korean mini twinned with less funky Hyundai i10. Three-pot 1.0 is slow but sweeter than 1.25 four. Smart interior, small boot > **VERDICT** You'll never benefit from the 7-year warranty and VW's Up is better to drive

### RIO ★★★★★

> Long on space, short on enjoyment, life with a Rio is no carnival. Diesel refinement will have you driving to a favela in the hope of a carjacking > **VERDICT** White goods car gets the basics right but there are too many better rivals

### CEED HATCH/SW/PROCEED ★★★★★

> Good-looking Korean Golf wannabe is big on equipment and not bad to drive. Ceed is 5dr, Proceed gets 3, and SW is the wagon > **VERDICT** Entirely credible, Europe's best is still a step ahead, but for how much longer?

### SOUL ★★★★★

> Improved second-gen chunky spunky SUV better to drive but ride and noise suppression poor. Petrol version rubbish, but much cheaper > **VERDICT** A Korean with character but other SUVs are more rounded (in both senses)

### OPTIMA ★★★★★

> Eye-catching, but dynamically second-rate Mondeo clone much more appealing for last year's new chairs 'n' dampers refresh. Diesel only > **VERDICT** Not as bad as its scarcity suggests

### VENGA ★★★★★

> Weird sit-up supermini-cum-MPV packs Focus space into near-city-car dimensions. Hard to get comfy though. 1.4 petrol best > **VERDICT** Too pricey and too ordinary to drive for us to care

### CARENS ★★★★★

> Big, versatile, value-packed seven-seater. Go diesel - 1.6 petrol is wheezier than emphysema-riddled asthmatic with a punctured lung. > **VERDICT** For all its pseudo-premium Euro aspirations, this is the stuff Kia still does best

### SPORTAGE ★★★★★

> Sharply-styled SUV with pillars so fat it's like driving a zoetrope. Well equipped, but not that roomy, or much fun to drive. Choice of 2- or 4wd > **VERDICT** Strong on paper, but Qashqai and Mazda CX-5 work harder for your coin

### SORENTO ★★★★★

> Ambitious new flagship SUV reckons it's a real Land Rover rival. Now bigger than ever, and so is the price: up to £40k. 2.2 diesel only engine. > **VERDICT** Impressive, but lacks the badge and performance of genuine premium off-roaders

## KTM

### X-BOW ★★★★★

> 22nd century Ariel Atom from Austria's barmy motorbike maker mixes carbon construction with hardy Audi turbo'd 2.0 four > **VERDICT** Big money, big grins, but single-seat BAC Mono gives more racecar-like experience

## LAMBORGHINI

### HURACAN ★★★★★

> Way more accomplished Gallardo successor twinned with new Audi R8. New dual-clutch 'box mandatory. Steer clear of optional 'Dynamic' rack > **VERDICT** Beats the new 488 for aural excitement, but Ferrari retains its edge when it comes to everything else

### AVENTADOR/SV ★★★★★

> The F12 may be better in every respect, but this is what a supercar should look like. Limited run Aventador SV closes that gap with shocking power and agility > **VERDICT** SV is the one to have. Sub-7min 'Ring lap makes the hybrid hypercar crew look stupidly expensive

## LAND ROVER

### DEFENDER ★★★★★

> Like Churchill's second term as prime minister, 60-year-old workhorse is anachronistic and out of touch, yet tolerated out of sentiment > **VERDICT** Roast beef. Concorde. Arkwright's Mill. Six wives. Rain. Defender. Dies this year

### DISCOVERY SPORT ★★★★★

> 'Educated, professional luxury SUV desperately seeking decent diesel engine.' Ingenium replied. Happy ever after? > **VERDICT** Comfy silence a promising start. We'll know it's love when they get the interior decorators in

### DISCOVERY ★★★★★

> Middle England metal edifice brilliantly capable at driving over lefty hunt saboteurs, mud and street furniture. Only one diesel > **VERDICT** Perfectly balances picknicking luxury, farming legwork and small-c conservatism

### RANGE ROVER EVOQUE ★★★★★

> The definitive posh mums' SUV. Expensive price offset by superb RVs although wedgy styling means interior space of a half-squeezed toothpaste tube > **VERDICT** No car has been more perfectly pitched at its intended audience

### RANGE ROVER SPORT ★★★★★

> As luxurious as a Range, as practical as a Disco, better looking than an Evoque and could follow a Defender cross country. Add in impressive handling and ballistic SVR and diesel versions > **VERDICT** Nobody likes a show-off

### RANGE ROVER ★★★★★

> A benchmark in luxury SUVs. V6 diesel perfectly acceptable, supercharged V8 petrol hilarious > **VERDICT** The perfect car for smuggling cash to Switzerland, skiing, turning up at a ball, game shooting and being smug

## LEXUS

### CT ★★★★★

> Pig-ugly premium Prius a bizarre mix of decent handling, woeful performance and a ride so poor it makes a black cab feel like an S-class > **VERDICT** Rubbish. Wouldn't merit a single sale if company car tax bills were less CO2-focused

## IS ★★★★★

> Sharp-suited, well-specced 3-series rival finally gets decent rear space. Good chassis, but 250 V6 irrelevant, and frugal hybrid hobbled by nasty CVT > **VERDICT** So close. Give this a proper auto 'box and it would be right up there

### GS ★★★★★

> GS makes twin-pronged hybrid-only attack on German territory. 450h quicker and handles; 300h is the one to buy (with your company's money) > **VERDICT** 300 makes company car sense, but don't expect to take the B-roads home

### LS ★★★★★

> Monstrously expensive but so refined it makes a library feel like a sound-off competition (which the Mark Levinson hi-fi could probably win) > **VERDICT** Built for those in the back, but the S-class makes every seat worth buying a ticket for

### NX ★★★★★

> Trumps Audi Q5 with a fabulous interior and arrest-me (for persecuting curves) exterior design. Fwd or 4wd with electric motor at rear > **VERDICT** Doesn't work as a driver's car, so take the NX300h hybrid over faster, costlier NX200t

### RX ★★★★★

> Looks like Darth Vader's helmet with wheels on but lacks any of the Dark Lord's charisma. Luke wouldn't want it as his car, let alone as his father > **VERDICT** Superb build quality and refinement, out-of-date hybrid tech

### RC/RC-F ★★★★★

> V8 IS-F successor has the raw ingredients, but chef fried them up with too much lard. With no diesel or hybrid, regular RC's a bit player > **VERDICT** 4/M4 rival five years late for the party

## LOTUS

### ELISE ★★★★★

> Reminds just how connected cars used to be. Slothful base 1.6 reminds how they used to go, too, so pick 1.8. Alfa 4C is a pricey, pale imitation > **VERDICT** Still sensational, but a 10-year old example does the same job for half the price

### EXIGE ★★★★★

> Gym-bunny Elise with supercharged V6, but the same beautifully connected unassisted steering. Stripped Cup version is Hethel's GT3 RS > **VERDICT** The best Lotus, but Cayman GT5 and new GT4 match it every step

### EVORA 400 ★★★★★

> Thoroughly refreshed Evora loses its looks but gains easier access and thumping supercharged 400bhp > **VERDICT** The chassis and steering are Lotus at its sparkling best. Sublime, but you'll still buy a Cayman

## McLAREN

### 650S ★★★★★

> Original 12C showed real promise, 650S delivers on it in spades. Trouble is the new 675LT now makes the 650S feel like a poor relation... > **VERDICT** Still two reasons to buy over the 675LT: it's £60k cheaper and not sold out

### 675LT ★★★★★

> What happens when you upgrade 33% of the 650S? Absolute bloody magic. 666bhp, stiffer suspension, faster gearshifts, quicker steering and lighter by 100kg, whatever deal Woking's done with the devil, it's worked > **VERDICT** This is the McLaren you've been looking for

### P1 ★★★★★

> £1m hybrid hypercar with aero straight from McLaren's F1 brains. All sold, and if you haven't got one you can't have track-only GTR either > **VERDICT** Astounding, but LaFerrari feels more special (as it should for £400k more)

## MASERATI

### GHIBLI ★★★★★

> A Maserati for the price of a 5-series! A bad-riding one with a disappointing interior, but still, a Maserati! > **VERDICT** The best badge on your company car list, but not the best car

### QUATTROPORTE ★★★★★

> Supersaloon-cum-limo can't decide what it wants to be. Looks great, handles better, rides worse. Twin-turbo V8 rapid; diesel a stopgap > **VERDICT** Buy it to stretch its legs, not because you want to kick back and stretch your own

### GRAN TURISMO/GRAN CABRIO ★★★★★

> Four genuine seats a rarity in this class, but fill them and you'll regret choosing the weedy 4.2 over the 4.7 at the first sniff of a hill > **VERDICT** Podgy, pretty, practical GT for folk who hate four-door faux coupes. And luggage

### GT MC STRADALE ★★★★★

> Defies hulking 1770kg mass (and that's after a 110kg diet) and modest 444bhp to deliver an engaging driving experience. Epic noise > **VERDICT** Massively underrated. A GT3 for an Italian lathario with a 'Ring season pass

## MAZDA

### 2 ★★★★★

> Shot-in-the-arm supermini packs value, handling and looks, leaving sweatmarks on the shirts of VW Polo marketing team. Still a bit Poundland inside > **VERDICT** Under-radar Fiesta threatener gatecrashes the top table

### 3 HATCH/SALOON/ESTATE ★★★★★

> Another left-field, right-on Mazda that's great to drive and cheap to run. Like shifting gears? You'll love the 118bhp unblown 1.5. If not, go diesel > **VERDICT** Don't buy a family hatch until you've tried one. Oh, a Golf? Apart from that

### 5 ★★★★★

> Ancient off-the-pace MPV that looks like its been side-swiped by a kamikaze dispatch rider. Roomy and reasonable to drive, but just not > **VERDICT** Large 'n' loaded but there're too many fresher rivals to warrant wasting your wedge

### 6 SALOON/TOURER ★★★★★

> Boss won't let you have a 3-series? Double your digit and try this impressive alternative. Handles well but rides like the tyres have DTs > **VERDICT** Swoopily styled, tax friendly, entertaining alternative to po-faced Passat

MADE IN SWEDEN.  
TUNED FOR BRITAIN.  
THE VOLVO V40 R-DESIGN.

British roads are different from Swedish roads. That's why we tested and tuned the V40 R-Design's suspension here in Britain. It puts you in total control, straightening out the toughest of hairpin turns and taming even the meanest of speed bumps.

BOOK A TEST DRIVE TODAY  
AT [VOLVOCARS.CO.UK](http://VOLVOCARS.CO.UK)

Available with 3 years complementary servicing when purchased on Volvo Advantage Personal Contract Purchase.

#### Personal Contract Purchase Representative

Example: V40 T2 R-Design Rebel Blue

48 Monthly payments	£269
Customer deposit	£269
Finance deposit contribution	£750
Representative APR	4.9% APR
On the road price*	£19,862.50
Total amount of credit	£18,843.50
Interest charges	£2,718.50
Total amount payable	£22,561
Optional final payment	£8,650
Duration of agreement (months)	49
Fixed rate of interest p.a.	2.52%
Mileage per annum	8,000
Excess mileage charge	14.9p per mile



Finance subject to status. Retail sales only. \*Subject to availability at participating dealers only on vehicles registered between 01/10/15 and 31/12/15. At the end of the agreement there are 3 options: (i) Renew: Part exchange the vehicle; (ii) Retain: Pay the Optional Final Payment to own the vehicle or (iii) Return the vehicle. Further charges may be made subject to the condition or mileage of the vehicle. Terms and conditions apply. Applicants must be 18 or over. Guarantees/Inheritance may be required. Volvo Car Credit RH1 1SR. You will not own the vehicle until all payments are made. The service offer is only applicable when purchasing on Volvo Advantage Personal Contract Purchase on vehicles ordered between 01/10/15 and 31/12/15. Services must be carried out at a Volvo Authorised Repairer. Retail offer only. Excludes fleet operators and business users. See [volvocars.co.uk](http://volvocars.co.uk) for full terms and conditions.



## CX-3 ★★★★★

> Late arrival to the compact crossover party, but worth a look thanks to smart, premium cabin and crisp, engaging drive. Pity about the firm ride > **VERDICT** Pricey, but better than most and well equipped. Ideal MX-5 social life support truck

## CX-5 ★★★★★

> Crisply styled, commodious crossover is stonking value. Handles tidily but ride and refinement could be better. Pick base fwd diesel > **VERDICT** MX-5 aside, this is the best thing to come out of Mazda for years

## MX-5 ★★★★★

> Smaller than the '89 original, and in real terms half the price. 1.5 sweet but a little slow; 158bhp 2.0 quicker but charismatically challenged > **VERDICT** Brilliantly uncomplicated budget sports car. Dink the GTi for this

## MERCEDES

### A-CLASS ★★★★★

**FACELIFT SOON** > Cool in the manner of a skinny, 20-a-day fashionista – the body is writing cheques its heart can't cash. Expensive, cramped and brittle to drive > **VERDICT** Don't be swayed by the looks, A3 and 1-series do the job better

### A45 AMG ★★★★★

> Madly turbocharged four-pot with 355bhp and four-wheel drive. Goes like a banker who knows the game is up; almost as expensive > **VERDICT** Resets the bar for super hot hatches. Doesn't mean it's the one to have

### B-CLASS ★★★★★

> Posh MPV big brother to the A-class misses out on the looks and the charisma, but is far more homely and just as technically savvy > **VERDICT** So boring the BMW 2-series Active Tourer actually begins to make sense

### CLA SALOON/SHOOTING BRAKE ★★★★★

> CLS clone based on the A-class, now including the Shooting Brake swoopy estate. Lacks gravitas of the former and sex appeal of the latter > **VERDICT** Just because you can make something smaller doesn't mean you should

### C-CLASS SALOON/ESTATE ★★★★★

> Latest C impresses with mini S-class looks and almost all the same on-board tech. Denies muttering it wishes the 3-series would drop dead > **VERDICT** BMW still better to drive, but if you want a relaxing techno cocoon, this is it

### C-CLASS COUPE ★★★★★

**REPLACED SOON** > Currently still a hangover from the previous generation C-class. And no matter how good the party, a hangover is still a hangover > **VERDICT** Wait for the new version, due later in 2015

### C63 AMG ★★★★★

> New C63 ditches the old 6.2 V8 for the new twin-turbo 4.0 from the AMG GT. Four-door only; M3 last seen looking for a doctor's note > **VERDICT** Mega traction and one of the best turbo engines on sale. Gets our vote

### E-CLASS SALOON/ESTATE ★★★★★

**REPLACED SOON** > Large, lovely, but overshadowed by the allure of the CLS – unless you want to look like a German taxi driver > **VERDICT** The most old-school Merc, which has a certain appeal

### E-CLASS COUPE/CONVERTIBLE ★★★★★

> CLK-replacing Coupe and Convertible are still C-class derived – and old C-class at that – despite the name. Both seat four in decent comfort > **VERDICT** Restrained and tasteful approach to mid-size luxury. Feeling their age

### E63 AMG ★★★★★

> 5.5-litre V8 twin-turbo with up to 577bhp and rear-wheel-drive only in the UK. Like a BMW M5, but without the artificial enhancement > **VERDICT** Bit of a blunt instrument. Spectacular soundtrack means you won't care

### CLS/SHOOTING BRAKE ★★★★★

> The word 'coupaloon' is banned from these pages. Which is fine, because we're all slightly in love with the glamorous Shooting Brake > **VERDICT** Second-gen version of the original four-door coupe continues to lead the pack

## S-CLASS ★★★★★

**BEST IN CLASS** > Enormously technically accomplished, with camera-guided ride quality and stacks of safety kit. Maybach and Pullman variants immensely flash > **VERDICT** Makes 7-series/A8 seem like toys. Captains of industry should insist on it

### S-CLASS COUPE ★★★★★

> 5m-long two-door with stunning interior and optional suspension that leans into bends like a motorbike. Barking mad indulgence > **VERDICT** Buy it as a tribute to your own personal wealth. Don't expect to get let out at junctions

### S63/S65 AMG ★★★★★

> Twin-turbo 577bhp V8 and 621bhp V12 S-class variants, because being richer than the world isn't enough and you need to out-drag it, too > **VERDICT** S63 V8 is bonkers, S65 V12 utterly certifiable. Does your chauffeur deserve it?

### GLA ★★★★★

> Confused A-class on stilts with lifestyle pretensions and unnecessary surplus of interior air vents. GLA45 AMG simply unnecessary > **VERDICT** An A-class for the bewildered. Maybe you thought you were ordering a GLC?

### GLC ★★★★★

> GLK replacement project, now available in right-hand drive. Sounds like you shouldn't care, but the interior might just make you moist > **VERDICT** Rivals are cheaper, better to drive – GLC makes you feel special inside

### G-CLASS ★★★★★

> Cold War relic that's so solidly built it could ram raid a bank vault. Obscene special editions a growing – literally – Mercedes obsession > **VERDICT** You shouldn't want one, but... Will outlast any Defender. And possibly the planet

### GLE/GLE COUPE ★★★★★

> Rebadged M-class is heavy, ponderous and depressingly cheap inside. Plug-in hybrid plays the tech card, new Coupe an alternative to X6 > **VERDICT** As you were: it's perfectly adequate in a class dominated by the outstanding

### GL-CLASS ★★★★★

**FACELIFT SOON** > Massive seven-seater SUV makes the Audi Q7 look demure. Actually off-road capable. Lacks super-lux appeal of latest Range Rover > **VERDICT** Americans love 'em. Make of that what you will...

### SLK ★★★★★

> Small, folding hardtop 'sports car', engines range from a clattery diesel to a non-turbo V8 with cylinder deactivation. Neither of which particularly appeals > **VERDICT** Boxster so much better even your hairdresser could tell

### SL ★★★★★

> Large, folding hardtop 'sports car'. No diesel option, but you can have a twin-turbo V12. Ferrari California T now stealing its lunch money > **VERDICT** Fine for cruising that boulevard. If it wasn't for the aforementioned Ferrari

### AMG GT ★★★★★

> SLS replacement is smaller (just), cheaper (considerably) and blessed with a 4.0-litre twin-turbo V8 that will blow your mind > **VERDICT** It's got the muscle but maybe not the finesse; 911 buyers should still think twice

## MG

### MG3 ★★★★★

> Tough-looking, spacious supermini has handling that lives up to the promise of that badge. As does the woeful build, crap engine and concrete ride > **VERDICT** The Chinese are coming! But so far they've only got to Tajikistan

### MG6 ★★★★★

**STEER CLEAR** > Previous woeful also-ran now updated with more efficient diesel, more kit and a hefty price cut > **VERDICT** Better, but remains condemned by ghastly steering, buzzy engine. Wrong badge, wrong car, wrong owners

## MINI

### HATCH 3DR/5DR ★★★★★

> Bigger and gawkiest and less charming, but lovely BMW engines are smooth and peppy, while ride has improved without ruining

# THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE UGLY

handling. Five-door in danger of being practical > **VERDICT** A better ownership proposition than ever, even if you love it a little less

### COOPER S/JCW ★★★★★

> Up-sized BMW 2.0-litre four-pot-powered 228bhp JCW most powerful Mini ever. Terrific turboed fun, if a tad overwrought and synthetic > **VERDICT** Beware the options list, lest it lead to bullion robberies and perilous dangling over cliffs

### CLUBMAN ★★★★★

**NEW ENTRY** > Replace circus-freakery of old Clubdoor with full complement of portals, add longer wheelbase and bigger boot; now bake > **VERDICT** Loaf-alike maxi-Mini freshness, the grown-ups' choice

### COUNTRYMAN/PACEMAN ★★★★★

> Bigger Minis for people who don't want slightly smaller (but still quite big) Minis. Paceman even has fewer doors for those phobic of apertures. Niche > **VERDICT** Please, please make it stop. It's all just so wrong

## MITSUBISHI

### MIRAGE ★★★★★

**STEER CLEAR** > Looking for the ideal car to crash into a shopfront when staging a 'Look at this OAP selecting reverse rather than first!' YouTube sensation? This is it > **VERDICT** Slow, rough, harsh, bad. Sadly it's not a mirage, it's real

### ASX ★★★★★

> Forgotten among the slew of small SUVs, the ASX is rather good now, with decent ride and sharper looks. Selectable 2/4wd is handy, but engine is rattly and gearbox slushy > **VERDICT** More workmanlike than many, and better for it

### SHOGUN ★★★★★

> Great value old-school workhorse for those whose workplace is covered in mud, oil or bomb craters. Big, noisy diesel, chunky underpinnings and reliable, with hose-down cabin > **VERDICT** If you don't need this car, you don't need this car

### OUTLANDER ★★★★★

> Workmanlike cabin and infotainment invented when Steve Jobs was in nappies. But the PHEV is a plug-in ahead of the game, offering 30 electric miles > **VERDICT** The biggest-selling EV on the market shows underdogs can bite back

## MORGAN

### 3-WHEELER ★★★★★

> As comfortable as riding over Niagara Falls in a barrel and equally sane. Not as quick as it feels, but quick enough for a three-wheeler on bike tyres > **VERDICT** Brilliant Caterham alternative without the macho trackday posturing

### AERO ★★★★★

> Drop-top was first of the new-era Morgans and goes it alone since Aero Supersports, Coupe and Squiffy Perkins bought it at the Somme > **VERDICT** Two worlds collide. And with 367bhp they may not be the only ones doing the colliding

### PLUS 4/FOUR FOUR/ROADSTER ★★★★★

> Entry-level Mog still with 'traditional' ash frame and 'traditional' (ie, awful) dynamics. Four-seat 4/4 is surprise eco champ: 44mpg > **VERDICT** Cheap, considering the craftsmanship, even at £33k, but if you want an old car, buy one!

### PLUS 8 ★★★★★

> Don't be fooled by tatty-ho styling, 8 is built on 'modern' bonded and riveted Aero chassis. Fidgety like a child with worms > **VERDICT** Classic Morgan style, modern BMW V8 poke, manners like a five-term Borstal veteran

## NISSAN

### MICRA ★★★★★

**STEER CLEAR** > As alluring as a dentist's waiting room, and just as noisy – modern Micra is a shadow of its former self and unworthy of your interest > **VERDICT** Judge this book by its cover: it's dull to drive and just as cheap inside

### JUKE ★★★★★

> Mould-breaking compact crossover; you think it would look like that if the mould hadn't

broken? Cheap interior and so-so dynamics belie the hype > **VERDICT** Does it still count as 'different' if everybody's got one?

### NOTE ★★★★★

> Like a Honda Jazz with middle-age spread, this is a small, practical MPV-hatch with limited aspirations of greatness > **VERDICT** An automotive cardigan: deeply uncool but good at what it does

### LEAF ★★★★★

> Gawky looking purpose-built electric car proves that life after the internal combustion engine won't be that bad. Gets better with every revision > **VERDICT** Worth at least a cursory glance on your way to the BMW i3 showroom

### PULSAR ★★★★★

> So dull it can only be explained by a conspiracy theory claiming it owes its entire existence to a long-range Qashqai sales-boost strategy > **VERDICT** Buy a Focus. Or a Golf. Or a Ceed. Or an Auris. Okay, maybe not an Auris...

### QASHQAI ★★★★★

> Second-gen crossover carries on exactly where the original left off: meandering ominously in the middle lane to the tune of 'are we there yet?' > **VERDICT** Likeable, with a side order of resting on its own laurels

### X-TRAIL ★★★★★

> The X-Trail used to be a rough-tough off-roader apparently designed on an Etch-a-Sketch. Now it's a Qashqai put through a photocopier at +10% > **VERDICT** It still ain't exciting. But it's probably going to sell a lot better

### GT-R ★★★★★

> A monster in every respect, from the way goes to the amount it weighs. 4wd system practically sentient, and it gets faster every year > **VERDICT** No longer the supercar of the PlayStation Generation, now simply a supercar

## PAGANI

### HYUARA ★★★★★

> Spectacular cottage (villetta?) industry supercar with active aero, AMG-built 720bhp twin-turbo V12 and an interior more decadent than a Roman orgy > **VERDICT** Want have, can't have: they're all sold. But a roadster is rumoured

## PEUGEOT

### ION ★★★★★

> Rebadged Mitsubishi iMiev seats four, and just as well: with leasing bills at £400/month you'll need passengers to chip in > **VERDICT** Congestion-charge, road-tax and petrol-bill exempt. Zero-rated for driving pleasure too

### 108 ★★★★★

> Pug-faced city car. Go for 82bhp 1.2: the 68bhp 1.0 is so slow we're all monkeys when it set off and it still hasn't hit 60mph > **VERDICT** Reasonable no-frills city car but boot and rear space tight. Skoda Citigo is better

### 208 ★★★★★

> Refresh more than just a prettier face as dynamic update adds handling chops to 208's interior chic > **VERDICT** Pug's recovered that VaVaVoom from the back of the sofa. No, wait – that's the other lot

### 308 HATCH/SW ESTATE ★★★★★

> Handsome, hushed 308 at its best when eating motorway miles, or when you're watching it out of the window of your Golf. Fiddly touchscreen > **VERDICT** Hatch isn't up to scratch, but roomier SW wagon is worth a look

### 308 GTi ★★★★★

**NEW ENTRY** > Discreet styling hides playful proclivities; LSD keeps things tight up front while fantastic French chassis delivers lively rear > **VERDICT** 250 and 270 variants both great, but 270 gets more kit and extra power

### 508 SALOON/ESTATE ★★★★★

> Little-seen XL Pug with unconvincing cod German accent. HYbrid4 gets 4wd via 37bhp 'leccy motor on rear wheels' > **VERDICT** RXH is poor-man's Audi Allroad. Rest of range is padding on your company car list



# HASSLE FREE Fleet Car Solutions For Your Business

SHORT  
TERM CAR  
LEASING  
from just 28 days

## Benefits include:

- Managed fleets of modern vehicles
- No need to worry about vehicle depreciation
- Flexible leases – great for contract workers
- Nationwide service and branches
- Small and large fleets tailored to your business



**CARS**<sub>ON</sub>  
**DEMAND**

**CALL US TODAY**  
**0333 323 2670**  
sales@carsondemand.co.uk  
www.carsondemand.co.uk



**PARTNER TEPEE ★★★★★**

> Spacious, versatile Tepee so useful it could almost be a van. Funny, that. Slothful, spartan, but drives okay and 'real' MPVs can't match practicality > **VERDICT** Make your own clothes? Live in a Yurt? This is the car for you

**2008 ★★★★★**

> Welly-wearing 208 is front-drive only, though 'Grip Control' ESP divides torque left to right. Quality cabin, big boot, but Renault Captur prettier > **VERDICT** Strong, but it's late to the party and wearing a frock made out of coal sacks

**3008 ★★★★★**

> Get Pininfarina on the phone, this is a code red emergency! Revolting styling totally undermines this roomy and entirely reasonable crossover > **VERDICT** Hard to work up much of a trouser tent when the Qashqai looks so much sexier

**5008 ★★★★★**

> Woah! Do they still make that?! Who'd have thought? Stacks of space and at a decent price, but an S-Max is a vastly more satisfying steer > **VERDICT** Sound medium-MPV choice – if you live 34,678 miles from your nearest Ford dealer

**RCZ ★★★★★**

> Rough-riding coupe gets a rough ride at the hands of Audi's infinitely more polished TT. Decent handling, messy cabin, useless back seats > **VERDICT** There are better coupes, but if the styling suckers you, get a brisk RCZ 200

**RCZ R ★★★★★**

> Sweet bespoke chassis, Torsen LSD and mega 266bhp 1.6 that's both quick and capable of topping 40mpg. But £32k for a Peugeot... > **VERDICT** RCZ R says Peugeot still knows how to make a great car. They should do it more often

**PORSCHE**

**BOXSTER ★★★★★**

**BEST IN CLASS** > Sublime. Base 2.7 costs less than £40k but unless you like sitting on milk crates and being outdragged by hot hatches, go for the 3.4S > **VERDICT** Cheaper and more versatile than a Cayman, this is surely Porsche's best sports car

**BOXSTER SPYDER ★★★★★**

> It's no drop-top Cayman GT4, but with the same 911-derived 3.8, a manual gearbox and a special roof that no longer requires a team of boy scouts it is still mega > **VERDICT** Worth the extra £7k over the Boxster GTS? Why are you even asking that question?

**CAYMAN ★★★★★**

**BEST IN CLASS** > Tin-top Boxster with the same twin-boot practicality, more power and even sharper handling. Makes F-type look podgy and pricey > **VERDICT** The definitive 24/7 coupe. Badge snobbery only reason to spend £20k more on 911

**CAYMAN GT4 ★★★★★**

> Junior GT3 is first Cayman to get more power than current 911. 380bhp, manual 'box, LSD and a grin wider than a Glasgow smile > **VERDICT** Porsche finally admits that the Cayman and not the halo 911 is its real sports coupe

**911 ★★★★★**

**FACE LIFT SOON** > Wears a cravat these days (leaves the ripped jeans to the Cayman). Base 3.4 needs working: GTS wants to. Reborn Targa coolest of the lot > **VERDICT** Still pushes the buttons, and still the only proper sports car to carry the kids too

**911 GT3/GT3 RS ★★★★★**

> New engines, PDK-only, electric steering and rear steering too for this generation. Epic drive > **VERDICT** Both have won our end of year Sports Car Giant Test (2013, 2015). Enough said

**918 ★★★★★**

> Epic 4wd hybrid can waste GTIs with 6sec 0-62mph electric mode, then slay Lambos by adding 600bhp V8. Superb electric steering, too > **VERDICT** Almost overshadowed in the P1. LaFerrari posturing war, but easily as good

**MACAN ★★★★★**

**BEST IN CLASS** > Baby Cayenne is even better than dad – and Evoque. Base car with Golf GTI 2.0 makes no sense when S and S Diesel are pennies more > **VERDICT** GT3 RS for trackdays, Cayman GT4 for weekends, this for everything else. Sorted

**CAYENNE ★★★★★**

> Porsche's cash-cow is a prize German Angus now, handsome and the best SUV to drive. V6 S quick, too quiet, Diesel S dynamite > **VERDICT** A proper Porker? Turbo S's sub-8min Nürburgring lap time says yes

**PANAMERA ★★★★★**

> Super-sized supersaloon hamstrung by looking like a prom-night 911 stretch limo. Great interior but more buttons than a giant's cardigan > **VERDICT** Expensive, but no other luxury car drives this well. Turbo a powerhouse, GTS purer

**PROTON**

**STEER CLEAR**

**SAVVY ★★★★★**

> Oddball city car with refinement of a funfair generator, cramped cabin and sub-Chinese plastics. 50mpg sounds okay, but rivals do 70 > **VERDICT** Proton's best car easily merits its one-and-a-half-star rating. Oh, we don't do half stars

**SATRIA NEO ★★★★★**

> Lotus-tweaked chassis okay, rest makes Ingmar Bergman's catalogue look like a rom-com box set. Screen rake means pinhead room only > **VERDICT** 'The ultimate hot hatchback,' Proton claims. They missed a word out

**GEN-2 ★★★★★**

> Risible, unrefined Focus-sized hatch with a steering wheel mounted so inexplicably

low driving feels like performing a kettle bell exercise routine > **VERDICT** If you buy one, leave your brain to science. We need to know

**RADICAL**

**SR3 SL ★★★★★**

> Properly type-approved (street legal) SR3 gets a 300bhp blown Ford 2.0 instead of a bike motor, a heater and even a 12v socket. It's almost lavish! > **VERDICT** Toned down for occasional road use but still hairier than a cave man with hypertrichosis

**RXC TURBO ★★★★★**

> Play out those Le Mans fantasies on the commute with this Peterborough-built Polaris. Sequential 'box welcome in town like an EDL demo > **VERDICT** When you've outgrown your Caterhams and 911 GT3s, here's the answer

**RENAULT**

**TWIZY ★★★★★**

> Part electric scooter, part social experiment, it's easy to love the doorless Twizy, especially on balmy evenings along La Croisette. Grimy days in Doncaster a tougher ask > **VERDICT** Transportation of the future, if it's never wet in the future and you like chatting at traffic lights

**ZOE ★★★★★**

> Delightful little EV, now with increased range and cabin like a spa waiting room. Overall purchase now offered alongside confusing battery leasing option > **VERDICT** Zen-like calmness replaces nagging range anxiety

**TWINGO ★★★★★**

> Rear-engined rwd runabout isn't as nippy as it sounds, but is roomy, with clever smartphone connectivity. More cheeky than sister Smart, and cheaper > **VERDICT** Lower-power version with '80s F1 Turbo paintjob the way to go

**CLIO ★★★★★**

> Welcome return to form for the five-door Clio with even boggio ones looking handsome, a well sorted cabin and sprightly driving qualities. Three-cylinder turbo petrol a (slowish) hoot > **VERDICT** Fiesta more fun, Clio more stylish

**CLIO RS ★★★★★**

> Remember when Clio RS was king of the hill? No? Probably for the best, because even new, more powerful RS Trophy can't off-set awful auto 'box > **VERDICT** Brings its own Trophy but still doesn't win. Rumoured RS Wooden Spoon pure speculation

**CAPTUR ★★★★★**

> It's a Clio on stilts – but that's not necessarily a bad thing. No 4x4 pretensions means focus is on personalisation. Good engines. No Juke to drive > **VERDICT** Technicolour clown car if you're not careful with the spec, otherwise okay

**MEGANE HATCH/TOURER/CABRIO ★★★★★**

**REPLACED SOON** > Despite a facelift, Megane is creaking like an octogenarian's hips. Sport Tourer offers photocopy repairman practicality. Coupe-Cabriolet is Bournemouth retirement fodder > **VERDICT** 'Drive the Change' is Renault's slogan. Could do with driving it faster

**MEGANERS ★★★★★**

> RS 265 turns average stock into hot-hatch genius, with stripped cabin, manual 'box and raucous 2.0 Turbo. Spartan, more powerful Trophy-R is bonkers > **VERDICT** What happens when RenaultSport, not marketeers, build cars

**GRAND SCENIC ★★★★★**

**REPLACED SOON** > Contraception failed, shotgun marriage, working harder to pay for it, old friends don't come round any more, debt, and a Grand Scenic > **VERDICT** Tired, lacking spark, plodding through each day. And that's just the car...

**KADJAR ★★★★★**

> Did Nissan leave the Qashqai parts bin store 'Kadjar', or did Alliance partners Renault break in like crossover copycat ninjas? Either way, this is the outcome > **VERDICT** And actually, it's not a bad one. Good looking, smooth riding, but disappointing interior plastics

**ROLLS-ROYCE**

**GHOST ★★★★★**

> A little posher, with more bespoke options to hide BMW-ness, new gearbox for the V12 and minor fettling to the metal > **VERDICT** Perfectly built and pitched and more individual. A Phantom for millionaires not billionaires

**WRAITH ★★★★★**

> A 624bhp twin-turbo V12 sporting vehicle that drives like no other. Dismisses distance but would never lower itself to squeal through bends > **VERDICT** Whisper it, but Rolls has produced an amazing driver's car

**PHANTOM ★★★★★**

**BEST IN CLASS** > Simply the best luxury car money can buy, with a cabin to embarrass a superyacht, opulence to make Donatella Versace blush (if she could), and a turbo V12 pulling you along. Not that you'll hear it > **VERDICT** Every car on earth starts with ambitions of being a Phantom

**SEAT**

**MII ★★★★★**

> Tedious-looking city-box is far less funky than Renault's Twingo but roomier and good to drive. You don't look at the mantelpiece, and all that > **VERDICT** VW Up more desirable, pretty Skoda Citigo cheaper. Siesta time in Seat's prod dept?

**LEASE ACADEMY: CITY CARS**

Every month we trawl the leasing brokers to find the hottest deals. Think before you buy!

**Fiat 500 1.2 Lounge 3dr £129**

Not the best to drive, but packed with airbags and still trendy. TwinAir engine not worth paying £200/month for  
Spec 1.2 petrol, fwd, 5spd manual, 68bhp, 60.1mpg, 110g/km  
List price £12,640  
£128.92/month for 48 months  
Initial payment £386.76  
Mileage allowance 10,000/year  
Via Target Car-Leasing



**Volkswagen Up 1.0 High Up 5dr £128**

There's not much in the monthly payments, so go for the Up over the Citigo or Mii. 59bhp Move Up is  
Spec 1.0 petrol, fwd, 9spd auto, 74bhp, 60.1mpg, 106g/km  
List price £11,875  
£127.94/month for 48 months  
Initial payment £383.82  
Mileage allowance 10,000/year  
Via Nationwide Vehicle Contracts



**Hyundai i10 1.0 SE Blue Drive 5dr £147**

SE Blue Drive gets climate control – but 13in rims, four seats and pricey monthly payment due to low residuals  
Spec 1.0 petrol, fwd, 5spd manual, 65bhp, 65.7mpg, 98g/km  
List price £10,225  
£147.22/month for 48 months  
Initial payment £441.66  
Mileage allowance 10,000/year  
Via Neva Direct



**Toyota Aygo X-Wave 1.0 X-Pression 5dr £176**

You can lease a basic Aygo for £110/month, but this one has the fold-back roof, sat-nav and stacks of kit  
Spec 1.0 petrol, fwd, 5spd, 68bhp, 68.9mpg, 95g/km  
List price £13,585  
£175.78/month for 48 months  
Initial payment £527.33  
Mileage allowance 10,000/year  
Via Vanarama







MidlandCredit.co.uk

Getting the Nation Driving

**NEED CAR FINANCE?**

**BUY ANY CAR**  
*from any* **DEALER**



**FAST DECISION**  
**WITHIN 1 HOUR**



**NO DEPOSIT**



**POOR CREDIT**



**NO FEES**



**EXCELLENT!**

★★★★★ reviews on

**TRUSTPILOT**

**FINANCE FROM**

**£3,000 to £50,000**



**NO ADMIN FEES**

Midland Credit Ltd is authorised & regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for consumer credit FCA no. 654302  
26.9% APR representative written Quotations available upon request, the rate you will be offered will depend upon  
your personal circumstances



**APPLY ONLINE NOW!**

**www.midlandcredit.co.uk**



*Or Call Us*

**03339 00 00 00**





**IBIZA HATCH/SC/ESTATE ★★★★★**

> Angular, angry-looking supermini, possibly because it knows how much better a Fiesta is to drive. It's not bad though, and ST wagon is huge  
> **VERDICT** Not as sporty as it likes to think, but holding up in face of newer, better-driving rivals

**IBIZA CUPRA ★★★★★**

> Bags more attitude than Polo GTI, and 180bhp turbo'd, supercharged 1.4 means it's not short of pace and hates fuel stops. DSG only, sadly  
> **VERDICT** Fast and feisty junior hot hatch, but outdriven by key rivals. Make ours a Fiesta ST

**TOLEDO ★★★★★****STEER CLEAR**

> OAP special whose sole interesting feature is that while it looks like a boring saloon, it's actually a boring hatch! Massive interior > **VERDICT** This and identical Skoda Rapid duke it out for UK's duller car. Czech please!

**LEON HATCH/ESTATE ★★★★★**

> Bigger third-gen Leon gets the same MQB platform as Golf and A3, but only 150+bhp cars get multi-link rear. Ride and cabin plastics brittle  
> **VERDICT** Sound, value-focused in-house Golf rival. ST wagon with 1.4TSi gets our cash

**LEON CUPRA ★★★★★**

> Stupidly rapid 280's mid-range pull makes Golf GTI sister look like a tickled up 1.2. Front-drive, so expect 300 miles from a set of fronts  
> **VERDICT** Huge amount of hot hatch for the cash – or hot wagon, in case of stylish Cupra ST

**ALTEA ★★★★★**

> Remember when all Seats had grilles like merkins? The genital garnish is alive and well in this old MPV. Longer XL's boot is a third bigger  
> **VERDICT** Handles okay but the cheap plastic interior has all the ambience of a township hut

**ALHAMBRA ★★★★★****FACELIFT SOON**

> Seat's biggest box has seven real seats. Such good family wheels even CAR's rear-drive-loving Ben (out of shape) Barry became an MPV convert > **VERDICT** Brilliant big bus does everything VW Sharan sister can for less lolly

**SKODA****CITIGO ★★★★★**

> Skoda's all but identical version of the VW Up and Seat Mii. Pick your badge – they're all well packaged but too noisy and slow > **VERDICT** Cheaper than the Up, but not by much. Hyundai i10 also worth a look. Yes, actual advice!

**FABIA HATCH/ESTATE ★★★★★**

> Very mature little supermini with bodywork creases a Corby trouser press would be proud of. Estate version ideal for Jack Russells  
> **VERDICT** Roomy, well made and unexciting – like a low-rent VW Polo. Which is what it is

**RAPID HATCH/SPACEBACK ★★★★★****STEER CLEAR**

> Long, narrow notchback hatch is automotive equivalent of Eastern Europe refugee. Big boot. Spaceback is shorter, more 'stylish', still dross > **VERDICT** Unless you've got a lot of potatoes and no other way to carry them, just don't

**OCTAVIA HATCH/ESTATE ★★★★★**

> Basically the same as a Golf and A3 underneath, but bigger, cheaper and more functional inside. Hot VRS versions old-school ballistic fun. 4x4s practical > **VERDICT** It's a lot of car for the money

**SUPERB SALOON/ESTATE ★★★★★**

> Now so vast inside it echoes. Sharp lines, stacks of kit and double the number of umbrellas. Shame about the dull interior and stiffer price > **VERDICT** All the family car you'll ever need. Only bigger

**SUPERB ★★★★★**

> Now so vast inside it echoes – new Superb gets sharp lines, stacks of kit and double the number of umbrellas. Shame about the dull interior and stiffer price > **VERDICT** All the family car you'll ever need. Only bigger

**ROOMSTER ★★★★★**

> Hipster lifestyle accessory without the hip. Which is no surprise as it's getting on a bit now. Flexible seating – loads of room for people

and kit > **VERDICT** Modern equivalent of a Fiat Multipla: ugly but useful. We'd call it Igor

**YETI ★★★★★****BEST IN CLASS**

> Ikea wardrobe on wheels – so practical you'll wonder how you ever lived without it. Good news is you don't have to assemble it yourself > **VERDICT** Bigger engines are better. Choose the Outdoor version for that rugged look. Grrr

**SMART****FORTWO ★★★★★**

> Chunkier new ForTwo has middle-age spread compared to the last one. Wider, with a much better ride, higher quality cabin and slicker auto, it is older, but wiser > **VERDICT** Less of a compromise, and still a brilliant city runabout

**FORFOUR ★★★★★**

> Renault/Merc tie-up means ForFour is accomplished with a classy cabin, although ludicrous pricing seem at odds with budget city car buyers > **VERDICT** Sister car Twingo is more than two grand cheaper. Work that out

**SSANGYONG****KORANDO ★★★★★**

> Borderline rubbish to drive but more practical than the Teflon-coated trousers you're probably wearing if you're giving it serious consideration > **VERDICT** Huge, handy and hellish value, but we'd have a pre-reg Qashqai or CX-5 any day

**REXTON W ★★★★★**

> Like that weird 1960s Izal bog roll, Rexton kind of does the job, but is hard and shiny to the touch and not that nice to use. Deals better with mud > **VERDICT** Plenty of space, but dynamically, like Izal, it's gone down the pan

**TURISMO ★★★★★**

> Marginally less odious than the old Rodius, but every bit as practical, this giant 7-seater is slower than the Crossrail boring machine > **VERDICT** Has mini-cab written all over it, or soon will, which will handily help disguise the ugliness

**TIVOLI ★★★★★**

> There's no getting away from it: Korea's also-ran carmaker (...) has built itself a bit of a contender. Great value, spacious and – shock – well-finished inside > **VERDICT** Enough to erase decades of dross? No. But it's a good start

**SUBARU****IMPREZA ★★★★★**

> Yes, it still exists beyond WRX and STi. No, you don't want one. Boggio Impreza reduced to a 1.6 petrol hatchback only with optional CVT. Shudder > **VERDICT** Have you got a brand new combine harvester? It's probably a better drive

**WRX/STi ★★★★★**

> Sorry WRX, I'm breaking up with you. It's not you, it's me. No, it is you, it's definitely you and your crashy ride, nasty dash and inflexible engine > **VERDICT** Brilliant, on its day, in its day. But that was yesterday, so let's call it a day

**XV ★★★★★**

> Hopelessly expensive half-way SUV half-wit. Suspension thumps so intrusive you'll think the Stomp musical is performing in the wheelarches > **VERDICT** In the tough crossover market Subaru makes up the numbers, and the price

**FORESTER ★★★★★**

> Appealingly functional square-rigger the kind of crossover that existed before we had 'lifestyles'. Good on road, great off it, but not cheap > **VERDICT** Old-school Subaru honest, charming. Tweed cap, pipe, sheep flock optional

**OUTBACK ★★★★★**

> The unloved Legacy's only UK legacy is this Allroad-style crossover. New for spring 2015, it's huge inside and the 4x4 look isn't all for show > **VERDICT** Still more niche than a cragside crevice. Dependable, not desirable

**BRZ ★★★★★**

> Gloriously simple but under-nourished rear-drive Boxer coupe, crying out for a supercharger. GT86 twin marginally more 'fun' > **VERDICT** Loveable car we wanted them to make but you don't want to buy

**Spec Expert****EQUIP THE PERFECT BMW 7-SERIES**

BMW's new flagship is the biggest, most advanced car it's ever produced – spec one like the chairman of the board.

Diesel is still the top choice for long-haul premium executive travel, so go straight to the newly upgraded 730d with 261bhp and 457lb ft of torque.

**Starting price: £64,530**

There's a choice of 11 colours as standard; we'd opt for classic Sapphire Black or elegant Sophisto Grey Xirallic. We'd not bother upgrading to larger wheels, as all of the designs are ugly and you get 18s anyway.

**Running total: £68,715**



You can choose from nine different Nappa leather interior finishes; avoid the ones that turn steering wheel and dashboard 'Dark Coffee' but we're not averse to some two-tone action – try Ivory/Black for a cool, clean look. Add Fineline Black Wood (£375) or Dark Grey Poplar (£455) trim for extra conference suite snap.

**Running total: £69,090**

Final touches of luxury that tempt us include soft-close doors (£560), internet connectivity (£95) and fancy ceramic control finish (£450). The rear seat tablet entertainment system also appeals, especially in combo with the rear massage seats, but that's a hefty £3635 extra.

**Total price: £76,640**

The long-wheelbase version is expected to be more popular this time, as BMW cranks up the luxury to challenge the S-class. But you have to pick: extra space (£3950) or xDrive (£2730) – you can't have both. Either way, £235 for the Sport auto transmission upgrade seems worthwhile.

**Running total: £68,715**

Next it's a question of personal taste: to M Sport or not to M Sport? The pluses are a bodykit, spangly 19in wheels, some M-badged trimmings and less chrome, but we prefer our M products pure, so would spend that £3.5k on something else.

**Running total: £68,715**



Now for some toys. Four-zone climate, sat-nav, smartphone enabled Remote Services, wi-fi, DAB, Display Key with built-in screen and front-seat massage function are all included. But you'll want the £400 surround-view cameras given the lwb 7er's 5.2m size, the 75% bigger head-up display for £1150, and for £160 the show-stopping gesture control.

**Running total: £70,800**



**TOTAL PRICE: £76,640**



# THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE UGLY

## SUZUKI

### CELERIO ★★★★★

> Braking-phobic city car otherwise spacious, full of kit and cheap. Three-cylinder petrol only plus all the handling vim of a B&Q Value wheelbarrow > **VERDICT** Dowdy and rowdy. Be glad you've got DAB and a cupholder

### SWIFT ★★★★★

> An unsung hero, and not just the excellent 134bhp Sport. Handles well, spacious and cheap. Upgraded Dualjet motor sweet > **VERDICT** Buy one and challenge anyone who questions your choice to a fistfight

### SX4 S-CROSS ★★★★★

> The cheap way to clone a Qashqai. Won't score any points for style, in fact you might hide it at the back of the school car park. Diesel is the best bet – you'll have to stop and get out less > **VERDICT** A crossover to be cross over

### JIMNY ★★★★★

> A box with a four-wheel-drive system bolted onto the bottom, and a 1.3-petrol engine hanging out front. There are seats too > **VERDICT** The swamps the Jimny can easily drive over were probably primordial when it first launched

### VITARA ★★★★★

> Two-tone cross-dresser to rival the Juke, with a handsome body and usefully economic diesel engine. Cabin could do with some work though > **VERDICT** Putting Rhinos and pink paint are a thing of the past: it's a serious family car now

## TESLA

### MODEL S ★★★★★

> Embarrassing car makers everywhere who said it can't be done, the staggering electric Model S has near 400-mile range, alluring infotainment and in the P90d, hyperdrive > **VERDICT** Star Trekking, across the universe, in the Tesla Model S along with Elon Musk...

## TOYOTA

### AYGO ★★★★★

> Bright-looking, stupidly-cramped city car with a characterful three-pot motor is as cheap to run as it feels. See also (ropey) Citroën C1, Pug 108 > **VERDICT** As 'Up'hill struggles go, battling VW with this is like climbing north face of the Aygo

### YARIS ★★★★★

> Sizeable but soulless, Yaris can't match rivals' dynamics or pocket luxury feel. Clever but costly hybrid version slashes fuel bills and boot space > **VERDICT** Largely joyless supermini last to be picked for the school football team

### AURIS ★★★★★

> Most Aurises sold are hybrids, mainly 'cos rest of the range is pants and other makers haven't got their hybrid acts together yet > **VERDICT** Only worth picking as company wheels if you have a Starbucks-like aversion to paying tax

### PRIUS ★★★★★

**REPLACED SOON** > Practical, thanks to big cabin and boot, not the think-of-a-number mpg figure. Now available as a plug-in, for a premium > **VERDICT** The original tofu eater offers as little to the taxman as to the guy behind the wheel

### AVENSIS SALOON/TOURER ★★★★★

> Journeyman company car is like a small oil-field drill: does little well – despite new BMW diesels. Tourer marginally more stylish > **VERDICT** White goods. Also available in light grey, medium grey, dark grey. Not beige, oddly

### VERSO ★★★★★

> Safe, stodgy seven-seater with snore-worthy chassis and a big-selling BMW-sourced 1.6 diesel that feels like half its horses are asleep too > **VERDICT** Does as little badly as it does well, but easy meat for Ford C-Max or Citroën Picasso

### RAV4 ★★★★★

> Was a soft-roader pioneer back in '94 but has settled for fluffy slippers in its old age. Trump card is boot big enough for a casino table > **VERDICT** Roomy, reasonable, unremarkable.

More dynamic SUVs deserve your dosh

### LAND CRUISER/V8 ★★★★★

> Actually two distinct models but both proper bare-knuckle ladder-frame brawlers that wouldn't know a latte if you spilt it on their rigger's boots > **VERDICT** Awful, but if we were stranded in the desert we'd trust it over a Range

### GT86 ★★★★★

> Identical to Subaru BRZ but dealers have actually sold more than three. Same delectable handling, shameful dearth of go from unblown 2.0 > **VERDICT** Sensational to drive, but such hard work only a handful of folk have found out

## VAUXHALL

### VIVA ★★★★★

> Luton's granny-mugger now smoother round the edges. Unless you pay extra for the slippery diff and hardcore suspension. Thug life. > **VERDICT** Better but still not best. Lacks Fiesta ST's polish and sparkle

### ADAM/ADAM ROCKS ★★★★★

> Obese Fiat 500 wannabe with huge options list and comedy naming shtick. Adam S warm hatch worth a thought; Rocks crossover flaccid > **VERDICT** Revitalised by new 1.0-litre turbo triple. Buy a paper bag and try it

### CORSA ★★★★★

> Made-over Corsa looks like a prime candidate for When Plastic Surgery Goes Bad, but it is more refined and better to drive. 1.0T a good motor > **VERDICT** Fiesta still cheerfully waving from way out in front. The git

### CORSA VXR ★★★★★

> Luton's granny mugger now a grand cheaper and smoother round the edges. An extra £2.4k gets you a slippery diff and hardcore suspension. Thug life. > **VERDICT** Honed hoonigan. Fiesta ST keeps its crown, but there's no shame in picking one of these

### ASTRA HATCH/ESTATE ★★★★★

**NEW ENTRY** > Massive step forward in terms of driving dynamics and interior design, added techno-charm of OnStar concierge and Apple CarPlay a bonus > **VERDICT** In hatchback grandmother's footsteps, Focus and Golf turn round to find Astra standing right behind them

### ASTRA GTC/VXR ★★★★★

**REPLACED SOON** > Astra 3dr remains as was for now; ie still stylish enough to stand comparison to Scirocco. VXR fearsomely fast but moody > **VERDICT** The sexiest Vauxhall. Let's hope replacement doesn't lose its mojo

### CASCADA ★★★★★

> Brave attempt to take on German compact cabriolets, but chassis has less integrity than Sepp Blatter. Good value if you don't mind the image (What image? Exactly!) > **VERDICT** Marty McFly wouldn't. Doc Emmett Brown just might

### INSIGNIA SALOON/TOURER ★★★★★

> Much improved by mid-life facelift, still handsome, spacious and loaded with kit. And then along came the all-new Mondeo and Passat > **VERDICT** An out-of-date car in a dying sector, latest rivals leaving it behind

### MERIVA ★★★★★

**REPLACED SOON** > Suicide is painless, goes the theme tune to M\*A\*S\*H\*, clearly not referring to tight car parks and the Meriva MPV's back-to-front rear doors > **VERDICT** Nice idea, but does anyone care about mainstream MPVs anymore?

### ZAFIRA TOURER ★★★★★

> Large MPV with slick seating arrangement and much more spacious than the old bus it replaced. Struggles in the face of S-Max greatness > **VERDICT** Accomplished but out-flanked by crossovers' rise to dominance

### MOKKA ★★★★★

> Pardon? What? Sorry – you're saying the noisy diesel engine has been replaced? Marvellous. What about the ride and handling? Oh > **VERDICT** Chunky outside, intricate inside, wearing to drive. Want to like it. Don't

### ANTARA ★★★★★

> Old-fashioned SUV based on the Chevrolet Captiva. Chevrolet has subsequently quit selling

cars in the UK altogether. You do the maths > **VERDICT** Comprehensively outclassed by Kuga etc. Felt dated at launch in 2007

### VXR8 ★★★★★

> 577bhp Aussie import that's £20k cheaper than an M5. Optional auto 'box's bid to add sophistication akin to serving lager in cut crystal. But who gives a 4X? > **VERDICT** Big, brutish charm. But row your own, mate

## VOLKSWAGEN

### UP ★★★★★

**BEST IN CLASS** > Box on wheels with VW badge is the kind of city car the Japanese have been building for years, except much better quality > **VERDICT** Hyped as a revolution and hardly that. But a spacious small car with a strong image

### POLO ★★★★★

> Bothered by the Fiesta's Airfix plastics? Buy a Polo instead – brilliant engines, bank-vault build quality and almost as good as the Ford to drive > **VERDICT** Small capacity turbo petrols are a riot, and increasingly efficient, too

### POLO GTI ★★★★★

> Baby GTI right down to the tartan seats, now with bigger balls. Vastly improved by introduction of manual gearbox. Surprisingly strong value > **VERDICT** Where's the nearest Byron Burger drive-thru?

### GOLF HATCH/ESTATE ★★★★★

**BEST IN CLASS** > Quality, refinement and safety put this at the top of the family car class. So it's a swot, basically. And we all know swots are boring > **VERDICT** The obvious choice. A3 offers extra flash for a bit more cash, Focus better to drive

### GOLF CABRIOLET ★★★★★

> The swot's sexy top-dropping sister promises open-air thrills but remains a sensible homebody at heart. Your parents would approve > **VERDICT** Or will you always be thinking about the A3 Cabriolet you almost bought?

### GOLF GTD/GTI/R ★★★★★

**BEST IN CLASS** > GTD is your dad in running shoes. GTI is your dad when he was wild, young and free. R is your dad having a mid-life crisis. All are ace > **VERDICT** After seven generations, VW has this hot-hatch thing nailed. Buy without regret

### GOLF SV ★★★★★

> The artist formerly known as the Golf Plus. And by 'artist' we mean medium-sized MPV. The car you always knew the Golf would grow up to be > **VERDICT** Not a bad choice, but now the BMW 2-series Active Tourer is breathing down its neck

### JETTA ★★★★★

> Utterly anonymous and the only VW people will assume is a Skoda. Based on old Golf platform > **VERDICT** Take a good, long, hard look at yourself. And snap out of it

### BEEETLE HATCH/CABRIO ★★★★★

> Although better to drive it lacks the design purity of its predecessor and the charm of the original. Unusually indulgent, by VW's standards > **VERDICT** Even wannabe retro hipsters are, like, so totally over this cynical marketing exercise, man

### SCIROCCO ★★★★★

> Old Golf in a slinky dress. Scrubs up well. Fun, friendly, and more generous in the back than Audi TT > **VERDICT** Ballistic R version definitely worthy; low-power diesel not so much

### PASSAT SALOON/ESTATE ★★★★★

> Interior design and refinement so good it shames some limos, cutting-edge kit and elegant looks. If only it wasn't so dull to drive > **VERDICT** Mega mile-muncher for the undemanding. Aesthete to Mondeo's athlete

### CC ★★★★★

**REPLACED SOON** > Previous Passat on a night out – but we aren't talking clubbing and a kebab. Dangerously close to being genuinely sexy, even if it is a CLS knock-off > **VERDICT** Like all the best knock-offs, it's almost as good and much cheaper

### PHAETON ★★★★★

**REPLACED SOON** > Aka VW's folly. The luxury car for people who don't want to be seen owning a luxury car. Which is how many people? Exactly > **VERDICT** Once a mighty feat of engineering over good sense. Old, outclassed and irrelevant

### TOURAN ★★★★★

**REPLACED SOON** > This is not just a van-like people carrier. This is a Volkswagen van-like people carrier. Doesn't go camping unless there's a yurt involved > **VERDICT** Only buy if you definitely don't want any more kids. C-Max so much better

### SHARAN ★★★★★

**FACELIFT SOON** > Large seven-seater sliding-door people carrier. Nice enough but made to look silly by the all-but-identical and significantly cheaper Seat Alhambra > **VERDICT** Get the same car from Seat for less. Or try the Ford Galaxy

### TIGUAN ★★★★★

**REPLACED SOON** > Superbly well-engineered and undemanding compact SUV. Anonymous in a reassuring kind of way. Big seller, for good reason > **VERDICT** Like a Golf on stilts, it does the job – very well

### TOUAREG ★★★★★

> The people's Porsche Cayenne. Do the people still want their own Cayenne? Well, it is nearly £10k cheaper... > **VERDICT** Big, comfy, competent SUV. Great on and off road

## VOLVO

### V40 ★★★★★

> Smart Swedish effort in a sector dominated by Germans with efficient D4 engine and impressive kit. But it's a bit bloated in seat, suspension and steering feel > **VERDICT** Sitting uncomfortably between Golf and A3. A rock and hard place

### S60 ★★★★★

> A sporting saloon that, well, just isn't thanks to steering that seems to be bored with driving. Serious identity crisis ensues, although R Design models look smart enough > **VERDICT** Volvo gambled on a 3-series rival and lost

### V60 ★★★★★

> A Frenchman who can't cook. A Jackson who can't dance. A Volvo estate which can't carry much. No such things against the very nature of being exist, do they? > **VERDICT** Handsome, safe, efficient estate hamstrung by one issue...

### V70 ★★★★★

> Make every V60 designer live in the boot of a V70 until they understand Volvo estates. Ageing, slow, and now diesel only, but as comfy as a rest home > **VERDICT** Please Volvo, never veer from this template, for fashion or economy

### S80 ★★★★★

> Numb steering, wafy ride, feeling you should have bought a 5-series, decent, strong diesel engines > **VERDICT** The S80 is like carpet slippers: it does pottering about well, but is ill-suited to anything else

### XC60 ★★★★★

> Space, sharp looks, competitive pricing, family safety and a wipe-clean cabin. Only grumbles are grumbly D5 diesel engine and high CO2 > **VERDICT** Volvo really is good at SUVs. XC60 hard to beat, even by much newer competitors

### XC70 ★★★★★

> A V70 in breeches, with raised ride height and 4x4 option. Awd starts at less than 40 grand, which is good value if you find SUVs crass > **VERDICT** If you don't like having a dozen brace of shot pheasant in your boot, don't buy one

### XC90 ★★★★★

> It was worth the (long) wait: luxurious seven-seat interior, a smorgasbord of clever safety tech, efficient four-cylinder and plug-in drivetrains, and refined drive > **VERDICT** The handsome new XC90 is one of the most complete cars on sale at any price

## ZENOS

### E10/E10S ★★★★★

> Flyweight track car with aluminium backbone chassis and carbonfibre recycled from fighter jets, created by ex-Caterham brains trust > **VERDICT** Glorious handling, ferocious speed from Ecobost turbo S – a bright future beckons





## Insurance for:

- Sports car
- Rally car/Competition Vehicle
- Motorsport Personal Accident and Travel
- Storage and Transit
- Support/Service vehicles
- Track day

**0344 892 1966**



**[www.competition-car-insurance.co.uk](http://www.competition-car-insurance.co.uk)**





Talk to our sales advisors  
**01582 967777**  
 8am-10pm • 7 days a week

**The UK's Largest Private  
 Number Plates Dealer**

# NAMES AND WORDS

<b>CIO YNE</b> Coyne	ACK 207D ADE I3X AGA 7E ALA IIN	Ackroyd Adele Agate Ain	CON I4N COO I13Y COR I37T COI2 NER	Conlan Cooney Corlett Corner	HEN 22Y HIII DLE HOL 3E HOL I3Y	Henry Hindle Hole Holley	MER 70N M355 AGE MIII ONK MON I16A	Merton Message Million Monica	SAL I1IH S4II TER S426 ENT S62I VEN	Salih Salter Sargent Scriven
<b>SAV 310Y</b> Saveloy	ALF 23D A14 WAY A19 ORT AMB 233N	Alfred Allaway Allport Ambreen	COT 77N COW I3E COW I13Y CRA I1K	Cotton Cowie Cowlie Craik	HOL I3Y HOL I3Y HOL I3Y HOL I3Y	Holton Hornby Huckle Hulland	MOP 3D MOR 370N MOR 216E MOT 7T	Moped Moreton Morrice Mott	SEA 21E SEA I2S SEII WYN SES 4Y	Searle Sears Selwyn Sesay
<b>AME 7Y</b> Amev	DAM 3S ANN I84L 42 FAN	Ames Annibal Arfan	CUI2 OKS CUI2 LEY CUI2 NOW	Crooks Curley Curnow	HUR 25T I LDO I LKA	Hurst Ildo Ilka	MUJ 17T MUII SON MUS 70E	Mount Munson Mustoe	SET 73R SEW 42D SHE 27L	Setter Seward Sheryl
<b>BEA I1IE</b> Beale	ARM 50N ARII OTT 42 UNA	Armson Arnot Aruna	D4 DDS DEA 2R DEB 2A	Dadd Dear Debra	J46 GER JAM 4A JAY 7IE	Jagger Jama Jayne	MYI ARD MYR 713S N474 LLE	Mynard Myrtle Natalie	SHU 7T ESII VER S155 SON	Shore Short Shutt
<b>ALM 4N</b> Alman	ASH 3R BAL 7IC B42 BER	Asare Baltic Barber	DEI UXE D3 NBY DEI2 HAM	Deluxe Denby Denham	J013 SON JOS 53F JOW 37T	Jobson Josef Jowett	NAT IION NE55 STA N377 LES	Nation Nesta Nettles	SLE I16H SMA 27T WSM I7H	Sisson Sleigh Smart
<b>T47 TON</b> Tatton	B42 BER BAR I3IE BAY I1S	Baltic Barbie Baylis	D3 NNS DEI YER D24 GON	Dennis Denyer Diablo	JUS 716E KAY I13Y K3II ETT	Justice Kayley Kellett	NEW 64R NOR 2A NUR 70N	Newcar Nora Norton	WSM I7H CUE IX SOU 74R	Smith Snooker Soutar
<b>I4 WES</b> Lawes	BEA 2R BEA 73R BEE 70N	Bear Beater Beeton	D21 VER DUA IIE DUII HAM	Driver Duane Dunham	KEI YON KET I3Y KEY 7S	Kenyon Ketley Keys	ODD 80Y OHA 64N OHA 22A	Nusrat Ohagan Ohara	STR 444Y SPR 477T STII MPY	Seward Sheryl Starkey
<b>MER 6IA</b> Mercia	B3II BOW B3II SON 83 VAN	Benbow Benson Bevan	DUII HAM EAD 3E EAG 6IE	Dunham Eade Eagle	KI76 HEN LARK 2K LAT IIN	Kitchen Lark Latin	OHA 22A OHA 70R OR12 ELL	Ohagan Orator Orrell	STR 444Y STR 41R STR 41R	Stamp Starkey Stear
<b>BOX 4IL</b> Boxall	BEY I10N 814 NCA BLI3 ACH	Beynon Bianca Bleach	EAG 6IE E14 RLY EDW IIN	Eagle Early Edwin	LAT IIN LAII GHS LAV 32Y	Orator Laughs Lavery	OSM I4I OXI 3Y 65 PAM	Osman Oxley Pam	STE 4R STR 41R STR 41R	Strand Stray Talbot
<b>M42 GOT</b> Margot	81 END BOG 42T 800 N	Blend Bogart Boon	ELI ZAZ EYR 2E FAR 2ID	Eliza Eyre Farid	LEG 3IID LEN 44A L3 VER	Legend Lena Lever	PEN 13E P322 ETT PHO 313E	Panton Pantry Paresh	T4II BOT TAR 44A T422 ANT	Talbot Tara Tarrant
<b>SHE I1IL</b> Shell	BOU 6H BOU GHT BOU LDY	Bough Bought Bould	F34 STY FER 2N A612 FER	Feast Fern Ferrari	LI4 NNE LO14 DER LOC 6K	Lianne Loader Lock	P42 ESH PAR 550N PAT 216A	Pantony Parson Patric	TAS I33M T3 ALE T388 UTT	Tarrant Tasleem Tebbutt
<b>KE55 ELL</b> Kessell	BOW 3E 807 LE B12 AKE	Bowie Boyle Brake	FII EUR FLII TES F244 NKY	Fleur Flutes Frank	LOV 47T LUC I4N LUM IB	Lovatt Lucian Lumb	PAT 27K PAW I3Y PEE 3T	Patrick Pawley Peet	TII3 LMA 717 LEY TON 6G	Titley Tong Tonner
<b>SHE 3A</b> Shea	BRA 2R BRE 346H B123 NDA	Brar Breach Brenda	FRA 73R FRE 6D F12 EER	Frater Fred Freer	LYN 4S LYN 355S MAL 80N	Lynas Lynes Malbon	PEN 70N P322 ETT PHO 313E	Penton Perrett Phoebe	TON I13R TOII CAN 70 UT	Toucan Trot Trott
<b>CRA I1IK</b> Craik	BRU 70N B27 SON B16 KLE	Bruton Bryson Buckle	FUII ARD GAG 3E G4 LES	Fullard Gage Gale	MAM IIA M4II TON M42I ANA	Mamma Manton Mariana	PI6 EAT PLA IIK POR 217T	Pig Eat Plank Porritt	TUR 2K ULL I4H USH 33R	Tout Turk Ullah
<b>FAD I4N</b> Adian	BUN 73R BUS 53Y 87 RNE	Bunter Bussey Byrne	GAM 3E GAR 377H G4 UGE	Game Gareth Gauge	MAR I33E MAI2 SON M42 THA	Marie Marson Martha	POR 217T P24 SAD RAP I3Y	Porritt Prasad Rapey	VAR 6A V412 LEY VEN 70N	Varga Varley Venton
<b>SPR 46G</b> Spragg	CAI LER CAI2 TON CAT 3R	Callier Carton Caterer	GIA IUE GEA IE GER 12Y	Callier Gayle Gear	MAS I3N M455 AGE MAII LDA	Maslen Massage Matilda	R3II ATE 2 EO RH04 DES	Reardon Renate Reo	V32 NON VES 7A V16 TOR	Vernon Vesta Victor
<b>LO14 DER</b> Loader	CAT 72IN CAT 7IE CAV 3E	Catrin Cattle Cave	GER 12Y GII BEY GII HAM	Gerry Gilbey Gillham	M662 ORY MCE I20Y MCG I13E	Maya McCrory McElroy	ROII ERX ROM 3E RON 44N	Roller Rome Ronan	VOW I3S WAI LIT WAT 33R	Vowles Wallett Water
<b>MAII LDA</b> Matilda	CEA 53R CER 27S CHA IIG	Ceasar Cerys Chang	GIA IUE GEA IE GER 12Y	Goals Golder Gossip	MAR I33E MAI2 SON M42 THA	Marie Marson Martha	POR 217T P24 SAD RAP I3Y	Porritt Prasad Rapey	VAR 6A V412 LEY VEN 70N	Varga Varley Venton
<b>DEX 70N</b> Dexton	CHA 73R CI4 NCY CI4 UDE	Chater Clancy Claude	GOS 5IIP GWII YMS H14I NES	Gossip Gwilym Haines	MCK I4Y MCN 4IIR M3II ORS	McKay McNair Mellors	ROT 73N 20 XY RUD 63E	Rotten Rox Rudge	W11 ALE WON 6G WOI2 GAN	Whale Wong Worgan
<b>LEA 4R</b> Lear	COL I37T COL IER	Cole Collett Colter	HAI ATT HAM 6R HAS 7E	Hallatt Hamer Haste	MEN 5 MEP I14M MER 6Y	Mens Mephram Mercy	SAB 444H SAG 6E SAG IIA	Sabah Sage Sakina	W22I GHT W216 LEY Y420 LEY	Wright Wrigley Yardley
<b>L3 GGE</b> Legge										



**Quality registrations  
 all newly available**

<b>D 2</b>	<b>I GAP</b>	<b>AGM I</b>
<b>LS I</b>	<b>AMD I</b>	<b>SU 5</b>
<b>R 9</b>	<b>KO 2</b>	<b>LPS I</b>
<b>RK I</b>	<b>5 AH</b>	<b>PPC I</b>



**A Perfect Pair**



LSR I was originally issued in Angus, Scotland in 1954 and is available - together with its partner, I LSR - from Regtransfers



**BOOKS •  
 CUFFLINKS •  
 VOUCHERS •  
 MODEL CARS •**

# YOUR INITIALS

<b>WRH I</b> £39,995	AAD I ABF 4	6 BMO 5 BPR	5 DSF 9 DSL	2 ESD 6 ESH	I FTK I FVG	I HEE I HFF	I JNH 6 JRN	6 LDW LE I	I MHK I MKG	6 PGT I PHB	RJU I RK I	I SYY 43 T	VBH I I VBS	I WGL I WGP
<b>5 BCP</b> £7,995	8 ACN 1 AEA	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>EFL I</b> £39,995	5 AEG 7 AEJ	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>3 FMW</b> £7,995	6 AFG I AFL	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>I ORC</b> £24,995	AFT I AGM I	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>5 KDP</b> £6,995	6 AHG I ALR	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>I JDU</b> £24,995	AMD I I AMF	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>PHG 7</b> £7,995	AN I AOO I	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>I CVD</b> £29,995	APJ I I ATT	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>AY 6</b> £39,995	AWC I I AWI	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>WTN I</b> £29,995	AWV I AY 6	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>4 NCM</b> £6,995	I BAC I BBW	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>I LFE</b> £29,995	BC 6 BCC 4	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>G 29</b> £49,995	I BJT I BVJ	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM
<b>I TV</b> £150,000	36 BK BMF I	6 CDD 6 CFW	9 DTL 4 EAJ	1 ETS 1 EVH	I FVR GA I	I HFG HFL I	7 JTH 4 JTK	2 LEF I LFG	I LMG I LPH	6 PHS 99 PJ	I RRD I RRD	5 TCG I TCG	I VCM I VCM	I WHF I WHM



# You are what you Readly



## Exclusive **FREE** month offer

All you can read

Over 1,000 Magazines

All your favourites in one place

All for just £9.99 per month



**[Readly.co.uk/Car](http://Readly.co.uk/Car)**



**B.R.M.**  
-- Chronographes --

*BRM célèbre les 10 ans de la V12-44*  
*BRM celebrates 10 years of the V12-44*

10 ans  
years  
jahre  
年



V12-44-GT-10 ans

série limitée de 10 pièces  
limited edition of 10 pieces

[www.brm-manufacture.com](http://www.brm-manufacture.com)

+33(0)1 61 02 00 25

*Bernard Richards Manufacture*





## USE PROTECTION **ADD STYLE**



### RIMBLADES

Buy Online  
[www.rimblades.com](http://www.rimblades.com)  
£29.99 a set. Available in 10 colours  
A GREAT BRITISH INVENTION



#### KEY GARAGEVAC POINTS

- 1 Class leading cleaning performance
- 2 Strong, adjustable length aluminium wand with wall clip
- 3 40' / 12m stretch hose coils down to 8' / 2.4m
- 4 Extra tough polycarbonate body and tool holder
- 5 7 specialist tools, including soft pile brush for dashboard/leather



Send for a  
**FREE BROCHURE**  
and **FRIDGE MAGNET**  
that subtly hints for your  
significant other!

## CLEAN UP THIS CHRISTMAS

Twice the suction power of a domestic vacuum and 15 times that of a rechargeable, so whether it's a quick once over or a complete deep down valet **GarageVac has the power to perform.**

Instant access 'Grab n' Go' stretch hose so you can forget unwinding that extension lead and dragging the household vacuum out onto the drive!

Call today: **01270 291 059**

[www.garagevac.co.uk](http://www.garagevac.co.uk)

**Garage  
vac**

# WATCHCLUB

We Buy & Sell The Finest Pre-Owned Watches

For the finest vintage &  
pre-owned watches in the  
world please visit our  
Mayfair boutique est. 1981,  
or visit us online at  
[www.watchclub.com](http://www.watchclub.com)

4 & 5 Royal Arcade, 28 Old Bond Street  
London W1S 4SD

Open Mon - Sat 10:00am - 5:30pm

020 7495 4882 | [watchclub.com](http://watchclub.com)



Rolex Cosmograph Daytona from 1972. Ref. 6263



# SECOND TIME ROUND

GRAY'S ANTIQUE MARKET

58 DAVIES STREET, LONDON W1K 5LP

Open Monday - Friday from 10am

BUYING OR SELLING A WATCH?

**DON'T CALL US!**

UNTIL YOU HAVE CALLED EVERYONE ELSE!  
FOR

**ROLEX, CARTIER**

AND OTHER FINE WATCHES

**\*IMMEDIATE CASH PAID\***

HIGHEST PRICES

*Proof of identity required with purchase of all watches*

[www.secondtimeround.com](http://www.secondtimeround.com)

[www.secondtimeround.biz](http://www.secondtimeround.biz)

**24 HOUR TELEPHONE HOTLINE**

**020-7499-7442**



**BOTB**  
WIN YOUR DREAM CAR

WEEK 42  
CATERHAM 320R

WEEK 41  
MCLAREN 540C

WEEK 40  
NISSAN GT-R

WEEK 39  
ASTON MARTIN VANTAGE

WEEK 38  
RANGE ROVER EVOQUE

WIN YOUR DREAM CAR AT [BOTB.COM](http://BOTB.COM) - WINNER EVERY WEEK!





## REARGUARDS BUMPER TOP PAINT PROTECTORS

- A practical, simple and stylish solution to cover unsightly scuffed and scratched rear bumper tops
- Hides old paint scratches and prevents new ones thus avoiding costly bumper repairs!
- Quick and easy DIY fit using **3M** self-adhesive tape
- Individually tailored - moulded in recyclable ABS plastic with 4 colour options:  
• **Black • Silver • Carbon Look • Brushed Alloy Look**
- Looks like an original factory fitted product
- Possibly the most practical accessory for your car
- New models added monthly
- Designed & manufactured in the U.K. by **rgm**

"Thanks for sending the Rearguard for my MkVII Golf. It's fabulous - it does exactly what I needed, as the sill is particularly prone to damage. I don't understand why manufacturers don't fit something like it as standard equipment." **Mr R.J. VW Golf MkVII**

**Available for over 500 vehicles**



Visit and order online at: [www.rearguards.co.uk](http://www.rearguards.co.uk) Phone: **01525 853888** Email: [sales@rgmouldings.com](mailto:sales@rgmouldings.com)

## [www.watches.co.uk](http://www.watches.co.uk)

where time meets passion



SWISS WATCH  
COMPANY

We specialise in the acquisition and sale of high quality Swiss watches both modern and vintage, un-worn and pre-owned.

**Free Watch Valuation On-line  
INSTANT CASH PAID**

by appointment only:

**+44 (0)20 8994 4567**

474a Chiswick High Road, Chiswick, London, W4 5TT

Rolex ■ Panerai ■ Tag Heuer ■ Audemars Piguet ■ Omega ■ Breitling ■ Zenith ■ IWC ■ Jaeger Le Coultre

**specialised covers**  
innovative tailored protection

### THE ULTIMATE IN CAR COVER PROTECTION

INDOOR & OUTDOOR CUSTOM MADE CAR COVERS DESIGNED BY YOU.

**FULLY TAILORED.  
ANY MAKE, ANY MODEL**



CALL OUR TEAM ON **01943 864 646**  
VISIT OUR WEBSITE [www.specialisedcovers.com](http://www.specialisedcovers.com)



OFFICIAL SUPPLIERS TO:



**MADE IN BRITAIN**

**WIN** a fact-finding forest trip to a European paper mill

No wonder you ♥ paper



Did you know that almost 72% of paper across Europe is collected and recycled? In fact, it's one of the most recycled materials of all.\*

Magazines are printed on paper from natural and renewable wood, which is great to know if you love reading your favourite magazine.

To discover some surprising facts about print and paper, visit [www.twosides.info](http://www.twosides.info)

Win one of thirty European trips for two people to see sustainable forestry and paper making in action! Enter at [twosides.info/competition](http://twosides.info/competition)

Print and Paper.  
The environmental facts may surprise you



\*Monitoring Report of the European Recovered Paper Council (ERPC), 2013. Entrants must be aged 18 or over. Entries close 31.01.16. For full T&Cs visit [www.twosides.info/competition-terms](http://www.twosides.info/competition-terms)



Audemars Piguet

BREITLING

Cartier

FRANCK MULLER  
GENÈVE

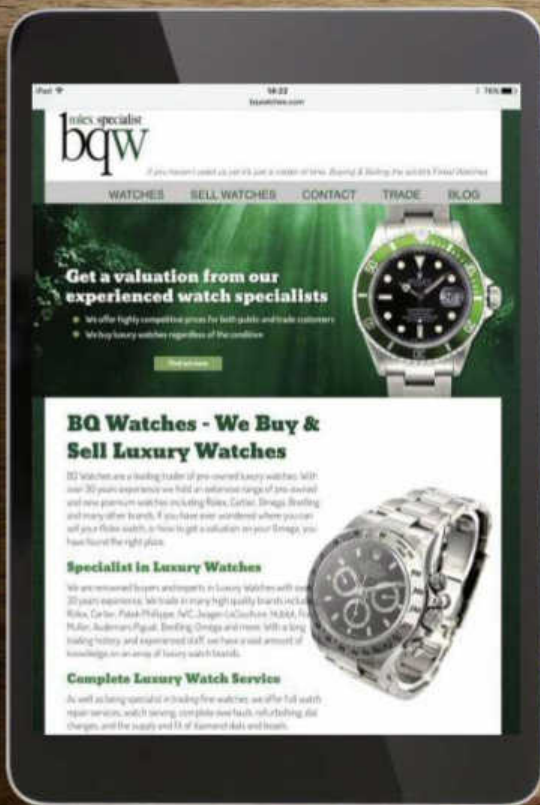
HUBLOT

IWC

JAEGGER-LECOULTRE

OMEGA

PATEK PHILIPPE



Buying & Selling the World's Finest Watches...

# WE WANT TO BUY YOUR ROLEX

Immediate decisions with no risks  
Speedy transaction - payment within the hour  
Insured postage paid by BQW  
(insured up to £15000)

rolex specialist  
**bqw**

**+44 (0)203 538 5221**  
**info@bqwwatches.com**  
**bqwwatches.com**



BQW House, 1 Back Lane, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 0HS | info@bqwwatches.com | www.bqwwatches.com | +44 (0)203 538 5221

## Supercar Driving Experiences at



**New for 2015 – Lamborghini Huracán & Jaguar F-Type S.**

**Plus – Lamborghini Aventador, Ferrari 458 Spider and F430, Aston Martin,**

**Audi R8, Porsche Cayman, Racing Cars and high speed rides with Tiff Needell in a BMW M4.**

**When only the best will do!**



Photo: ©Pete Gibson

High Tech Skid Pan facility at Thruxton – 3200m<sup>2</sup> of polished concrete  
with remote control water jets, Toyota GT86 and MINI Cooper training cars.

**T: 01264 882222** [thruxtonracing.co.uk](http://thruxtonracing.co.uk)







# BARTLEY

BMW & MINI SPECIALISTS



Units 23 & 24,  
New Forest Enterprise Centre,  
Rushington Business Park,  
Chapel Lane, Totton,  
Southampton, SO40 9LA

- › Fixed Price Servicing
- › Complete Diagnostics Capability
- › MOTs Arranged
- › Performance Upgrades & Tuning
- › Laser 4 Wheel Alignment
- › Free Courtesy Cars
- › Air Conditioning Servicing & Repair
- › Warranty Work Carried Out

[www.bartleyuk.com](http://www.bartleyuk.com)



Tel: 023 8066 1499  
Email: [info@bartleyuk.com](mailto:info@bartleyuk.com)

## Create your perfect garage!



Call now for a **FREE Design Survey** and see how your garage could look!

As Europe's leading garage interior company, we have the knowledge and experience to design your dream garage. Whether you're looking for a beautifully organised home for your car, or want to create a lifestyle room, our award-winning cabinets, flooring and wall-mounted storage provide the perfect solutions.

- Modular tool storage cabinets
- Flexible wall storage system
- PVC or porcelain floor tiles
- Design and install services



For a free brochure call **0845 371 0050** or download at [www.duragarages.com](http://www.duragarages.com)

**DURA**  
Fitted Garages

Alternatively, return this slip in an envelope (no stamp required) to:

**Freepost RSLX-YXCA-GUTJ,  
Dura Ltd, St James Road,  
Brackley NN13 7XY**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
POSTCODE \_\_\_\_\_ TEL \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

# THEY LOOK GREAT ON PAPER

# BUT WHICH IS THE BEST TO OWN?



**BETTER CHECK WITH  
PARKERS**

If you're buying a car who better to ask for advice than someone who already owns the model you're considering? At Parkers we have over **40,000 car reviews** from both real owners and our expert team of reviewers to help you make the right choice. So before you buy your next car, make sure you check with **Parkers.co.uk**.

**SEARCH PARKERS CAR REVIEWS OR VISIT [PARKERS.CO.UK](http://PARKERS.CO.UK)**





# WORRIED ABOUT EXPENSIVE CAR REPAIR BILLS?

15 YEARS ONLINE

30 DAYS MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

95% POSITIVE FEEDBACK

multi AWARD WINNING

Auto EXPRESS RECOMMENDED

If your car goes wrong, you could be faced with wallet busting repair bills. Not to mention the hassle of dealing with the garage and being without your motor for days, or even weeks on end.

**An award-winning car repair plan from Warrantywise gives you total peace of mind when your car goes bang!** All of our plans include car hire, hotel & onwards travel expenses as well as recovery as standard. You can also take your car to any VAT registered garage in the UK or Europe for repairs!

**Prices start from just £19 per month.** Best of all its been designed by motoring consumer champion, Quentin Willson.

*Quentin Willson*  
Designed by **Quentin Willson**

## QUENTIN WILLSON'S VIDEO GUIDE

Watch as motoring expert, Quentin Willson, explains the benefits of a used car warranty.

Watch Quentin's Video Guide  
[www.warrantywise.co.uk/guide](http://www.warrantywise.co.uk/guide)

Terms and conditions apply. Accurate at the time of printing.

Get a Quote Online  
**warrantywise.co.uk**

Call us on Freephone  
**0800 121 4801**

**Warrantywise**  
Simply the Best in the Business

## PROTECT ALL FOUR WHEELS

for less than it normally costs to refurbish just one!

- Protect your wheels from kerb damage
- Suits 98% of wheel and tyre combinations
- Tyres can be changed with AlloyGators in place
- Suitable for run-flat tyres
- Protects tyre wall from damage

PROTECT  
ENHANCE  
CUSTOMISE

BRITISH  
MADE

**ALLOYGATOR**  
WHEEL PROTECTION

For more information please visit  
[www.alloygator.com](http://www.alloygator.com)  
or call us on 08450 707078



**CHIP EXPRESS™**  
tuning specialists  
**Plug-in Diesel Upgrades**

Enjoy up to **40% more POWER**  
and **20% better ECONOMY!**



**Diesel Tuning for Cars, Commercials, Tractors & Boats**  
Fit yourself in minutes - instantly improve drivability!

14 DAY  
MONEY BACK  
GUARANTEE

Easy to:  
- Fit  
- Remove  
- Transfer

**tuv**  
CERT

**CE**

**ISO**  
9001  
QUALITY  
ASSURANCE

The CHIP Express™ tuning system is without doubt the most advanced plug-in diesel upgrade available. It works in harmony with your engine, retaining all safety functions without needing to interfere with the vehicle's existing on-board computer. It can be self fitted in minutes, adjusted for more performance and easily removed. It will free your vehicle from its manufacturer's limits.

**[www.chipexpress.com](http://www.chipexpress.com)**

Visit our website, see your vehicle's  
true potential, order online.

e: [email@chipexpress.com](mailto:email@chipexpress.com) t: 01727 730 956



# The car Top 10.

## Cars of the King

It's a one for the money, two for the dubious motors. Elvis Presley's cars reflected his love/hate relationship with good taste. By **Chris Chilton**



### 1 DE TOMASO PANTERA

Most famous as the car the King tried to murder, Presley reportedly popped a cap in his Italian-American supercar on several occasions in

response to its erratic running. Ford V8-powered Panteras were sold through Lincoln dealers, though Elvis's car is the only one with a bullet hole in the steering wheel. Probably.

### 2 FERRARI DINO 308 GT4

Elvis owned just one Ferrari in his 42 years, but it wasn't a stunning 275GTB like Steve McQueen's, or a beautiful 250GT California like James Coburn's. It was Bertone's ugly duckling 308GT4, rendered even less handsome by the addition of some revolting chrome wires. Well it was the jumpsuit era.



### 3 ROLLS-ROYCE PHANTOM V

While Phantom V owner Elvis was playing a race driver in filmic-fromage *Spinout*, Beatle John Lennon was busy flipping out and painting his own Rolls to look like a gypsy caravan. In 1968 Elvis gifted his more sober Rolls to a charity helping handicapped children – it raised \$35k.

### 4 MERCEDES 600

No rock star worth his nose-salts was without a Mercedes 600 in the '60s and Elvis was no different. The pinnacle of the Daimler range, the 600 featured complicated hydraulically power-assisted everything and a thumping 6.3-litre V8. Presley's powder-blue 1970 short wheelbase sold for £80,700 in 2010.



### 5 BMW 507

When it came to sweeping German girls off their feet in the late 1950s Elvis had a couple of advantages over his fellow GIs in Bad Nauheim. Being Elvis obviously didn't hurt, nor did living off-barracks, but even Gomer Pyle could have got his oats with a sexy BMW 507 at his disposal.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
WWW.WARRANTYWISE.CO.UK  
0800 121 4801

**Warrantywise**  
The UK's Best Used Car Warranty



### 6 MESSERSCHMITT

Yin and Jahn? Elvis owned the catfish-shaped tandem two-seater at the same time as a full-blown Cadillac, and this wasn't something he picked up while stationed in Germany with the army. He sold the bubble car in '57 (or traded it for clothes, bizarrely) but didn't get the buzz-cut and duffle bag until '58.

### 7 FORD T-BIRD

Though boasting one of the worst size/seats ratio of any car, Ford's two-seat T-bird Sports Roadster looked spectacularly jet-age cool with its fuselage styling and fibreglass tonneau cover. Elvis ordered one but soon helped Ford discover that the spokes on the Kelsey Hayes wires weren't up to the job when a wheel disintegrated.



### 8 LINCOLN ZEPHYR

Although he seemed to favour Caddies when the cash started coming in, Elvis also dabbled with its arch rival, Ford's upscale sub-brand. In fact Presley's first car was supposedly a battered '41 Lincoln which frequently broke down, cause to give any '50s musician the blues. Lincoln Parked, you might say.



### 9 CADILLAC FLEETWOOD

Elvis owned a stack of Cadillacs, from a '54 that tragically burned to the ground, to a hideous two-tone '77 that would surely be improved by doing the same. Most famous of the lot was a 1955 Fleetwood, painted pink and gifted to his beloved mother Gladys despite the fact that she couldn't actually drive.

### 10 STUTZ BLACKHAWK

A perfect car for Elvis's Vegas years, the gloriously kitsch Blackhawk was a Pontiac Grand Prix re-clothed with a handmade Italian body. Elvis was at the wheel of his in the last picture ever taken of him alive as he came home to Graceland before retiring to – and from – his throne.



**Warrantywise**  
The UK's Best Used Car Warranty

WWW.WARRANTYWISE.CO.UK 0800 121 4801

car, 0008-5987 is published 12 times a year by Bauer Consumer Media Ltd. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named Air Business Ltd, c/o Worldnet Shipping Inc., 156-15, 146th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Jamaica NY 11431. US Postmaster: Send address changes to CAR, Air Business Ltd, c/o Worldnet Shipping Inc., 156-15, 146th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA. Subscription records are maintained at Bauer Media Subscriptions, CDS Global, Tower House, Sovereign Park, Lathkill Street, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 9EF, United Kingdom. Air Business Ltd is acting as our mailing agent.

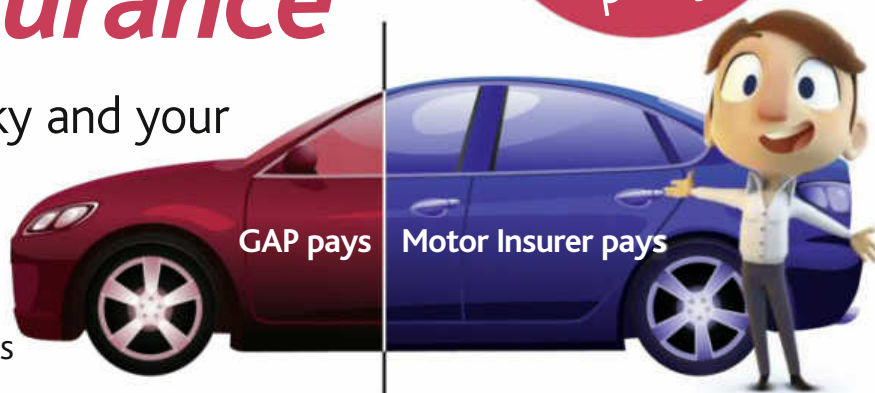


# Avoid paying excessive dealer prices for **GAP cover insurance**

From only  
£140 for a  
three-year  
policy

What happens if you are unlucky and your car is written-off or stolen?

The difference between what you purchased your car for and what an insurer would pay out could amount to several thousand pounds more than you expected.



Each year, 450,000+ cars are written off and 150,000\*\* are stolen. Settlements motorists receive are often not even enough to clear any outstanding finance, potentially leaving you in debt with no car at all.

Gap Insurance provided by Warranty Direct can cover this difference from only £140 for a three-year policy.

**FOR THE BEST PRICE QUOTE 'CAR MAGAZINE' WHEN YOU CALL OR VISIT US ONLINE.**

## More about GAP cover:

- Flexible levels and length of cover
- **Enjoy significant savings on premiums when compared to car dealership prices**
- Cover available for cars and vans from new and up to seven years old with less than 80,000 recorded miles and with a current value of less than £50,000
- Claim limit up to £25,000 including £500 toward any insurance excess
- Administered by Warranty Direct and underwritten at Pinnacle Insurance plc

Call 0800 097 8838 | **buy online** [www.car.gapcoverinsurance.co.uk](http://www.car.gapcoverinsurance.co.uk)

## *The complete extended Car Warranty package for **Car Magazine** readers!*

Warranty Direct has been offering award winning warranties since 1997.

Policies cover wear & tear, consequential damage\* and failures found during service or MOT as standard! Your choice of garage for repairs – main dealer or independent - with cover for vehicles up to 12 years or 120,000 miles.

Call 0800 731 7001 | [www.car.warrantydirect.co.uk](http://www.car.warrantydirect.co.uk)

**WE ALSO PROVIDE GREAT VALUE DEALS ON BREAKDOWN RECOVERY AND BIKE AND VAN WARRANTIES**

Terms and conditions apply, see websites for details. Warranty Direct is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Register number 309075.

\*Consequential damage is failure to insured parts caused by non-insured parts. Sources: +Honestjohn.co.uk 2015 \*\*LV=car Insurance report 2014.

Warranty policies include a 14-day cooling-off period (21 days for Gap) subject to no claim having been made. Warranty Direct Limited is a company, registered in England No. 3233010 at Pinnacle House, A1 Barnet Way, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, WD6 2XX. Vehicles on a contract hire or lease agreement are excluded from Gap insurance unless the insured will become the vehicle owner at the conclusion of the agreement.



# WE ARE ALL RACERS



## THE HIGH PERFORMANCE TYRE FOR RACERS.

### MICHELIN PILOT SPORT CUP 2, Approved for the PORSCHE Cayman GT4.

When it comes to high performance, Porsche and Michelin share the same passion for perfection. So when the uncompromising Cayman GT4 needed a new level of contact with the ground, Porsche and Michelin worked

shoulder to shoulder to craft, test and finally codevelop a truly exceptional high performance tyre. It's simply the latest chapter in more than fifty years the pair have spent together pursuing excellence on the road and in motorsport. No wonder that Michelin has been selected by Porsche as its strategic partner for tyres.

Release your inner racer and discover the MICHELIN high performance tyre range at:  
[www.michelin.co.uk](http://www.michelin.co.uk)



**MICHELIN Pilot Sport Cup 2** the track tyre suitable for everyday use. Thanks to MICHELIN Total Performance you can enjoy high performance and optimal safety together in total confidence.

